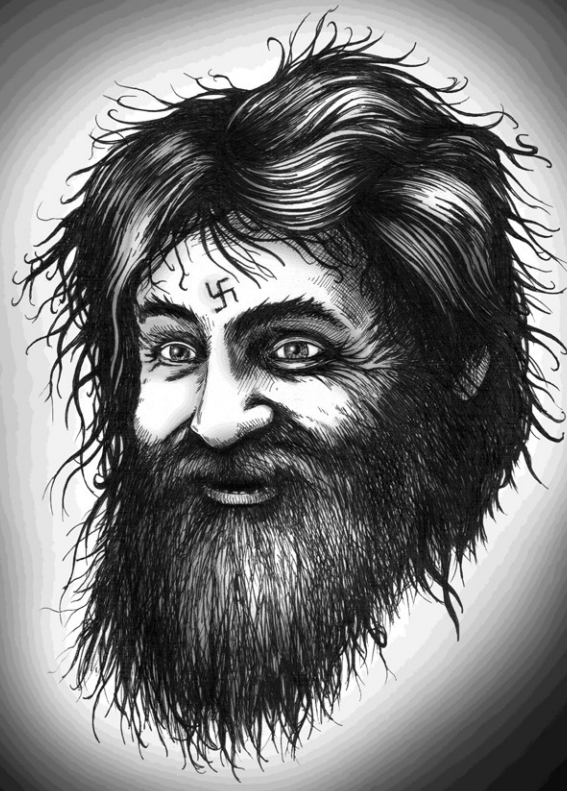
RIDING ON YOUR FEARS

A MANSON MURDERS ESSAY



BY CURT ROWLETT

RIDING ON YOUR FEARS

A Manson Murders Essay

A *Labyrinth13* Chapbook ©

Copyright © 2008 by Curt Rowlett

All rights reserved. All materials contained in this book are protected by United States copyright law.

Front cover & interior art Copyright © 2008 by Chadwick St. John, www.inkshadows.com.

Edited & formatted by Curt Rowlett.

RIDING ON YOUR FEARS

A Manson Murders Essay

A *Labyrinth13* Chapbook ©

Table of Contents

Acknowledgments.....1

Introduction.....4

A Man Called Manson.....9

The Roots of Manson's Philosophy.....24

Rumor Has It.....36

An Interesting Comparison Between Jesus Christ and Charles Manson.....48

Revelation 9.....49

The Summer of Love Breeds a Season of Hate: The Effects of the Manson Murders on Public Perceptions of the Hippie Lifestyle.....51

Charles Manson, Son of Sam and the Process Church of the Final Judgment: Exploring the Alleged Connections.....72

Footnotes & Appendixes.....112

Acknowledgments

A quick word of thanks goes to the following helpful human beings for their assistance in creating this work:

John Aes-Nihil: For invaluable information concerning the many Manson rumors and related minutiae.

Chadwick St. John: For the exceptional cover art and interior images.

Special thanks to: *Brother Isaiah* and *Sister Angela* of *The Process Church of the Final Judgment*, *Michael Mountain* and *Barbara Williamson* of *Best Friends Animal Society*, and to everyone who was kind enough to answer my many questions while engaged in research for this book.

Charlie was always saying that fear was beautiful. I must have heard him tell the Family fifty times they ought to live in a constant state of fear. To Charlie, fear was the same thing as awareness. The more fear you had, the more awareness you had. The more awareness, the more love. You know what it's like? Its like when you're really all scared out. You know, and you come to Now. Well, when you're at Now, you're totally conscious. The more fear the better. Charlie said that death was beautiful because people fear death. Fear really turns Charlie on.

Dialog from the 1976 television movie, *Helter Skelter*

Have you ever seen the coyote in the desert? Watching, tuned in, completely aware. Christ on the cross, the coyote in the desert - it's the same thing, man. The coyote is beautiful. He moves through the desert delicately, aware of everything, looking around. He hears every sound, smells every smell, sees everything that moves. He's in a state of total paranoia, and total paranoia is total awareness.

Quote from Charles Manson about "getting the fear," as published in the June 1970 issue of *Rolling Stone* magazine

---

To save the people from themselves would take a greater fear than the earth has ever seen.

Charles Manson

What is these places, that hide behind faces, that act like I'm just a demon?

Lyric from the Charles Manson song, *Riding On Your Fears*

Introduction

There will never be another crime case quite like that of the Charles Manson murders. Other infamous murder cases, such as the unsolved Jack the Ripper, Black Dahlia and Zodiac murders, contain enough elements to keep armchair researchers guessing for many years to come; indeed, there are numerous websites and books devoted solely to *all* of those crimes.

But it is my personal opinion that, due to the large number of unanswered questions, lingering mysteries, and unparalleled weirdness, the Manson murders tops them all.

The reason why the Manson case continues to hold such great fascination after nearly 40 years has everything to do with the unique parameters in which those crimes occurred, that being the rise and proliferation of the whole Haight-Ashbury hippie phenomenon, which by itself alone, was one of the most singular events in human history. And it is precisely *because* the murders occurred in the midst of the hippie explosion that makes the Manson saga so exceptional in that the Manson family probably would not have flourished, nor had the same sort of impact if the murders had occurred in *any other combination* of factors.[1] And that observation is merely *one* element among many that makes this case such an exceptional moment in human history.

I was only twelve years old when the Manson murders occurred. But I remember vividly the sensational and lurid press coverage, the horror and disbelief of my parents, neighbors and friends, the subsequent mistrustful looks and outright hostility aimed at anyone who even remotely looked like a hippie. But being young and fascinated with anything and everything connected with the hippie movement, I read all that I could get my young hands on about the Manson family. (Even at that young age, I had already begun to develop an interest in true crime and occult studies, an attraction that has not subsided to this day).

My original, youthful enthrallment for the Manson case has never diminished. Since that time, I have read every book and magazine article, watched every movie and television special, visited every website, and talked to as many people as I have had access to about the Manson murders. Over the years, I have found myself returning time and time again to the story because, just when I think that I have heard everything there is to know about the case, something new and exciting will surface. Charles Manson remains quite an enigmatic person and though we know considerably more today about him as a person and the inner workings of the family as a group (thanks largely to independent researchers), there are still many major areas of uncertainty surrounding the case.

It is not within the scope of this essay to provide you, the reader, with all of the details surrounding the Manson family and the crimes that they committed, but rather to focus on those areas that either remain in obscurity or where unanswered questions linger. Accordingly, I am working under the assumption that readers already have a basic familiarity with the core elements of the case. In the event that this is *not* the situation with you, I would suggest reading the following books on the Manson murders in order to familiarize yourself with the basic elements of the case:

• Vincent Bugliosi's *Helter Skelter* - for the *prosecutorial* side of the case. Be forewarned that this book definitely has its flaws. The book is, in essence, an anti-counterculture morality play. Close scrutiny by independent researchers has revealed that some of its facts are either erroneous or slanted toward the theory that Manson committed the murders solely to ignite a black-white race war called "Helter Skelter." Many people believe that Helter Skelter was something that Manson truly believed in, but that it served primarily as a way for him to program and control his followers. Another theory is that the murders may have actually been committed as revenge for a drug deal gone bad between Tate homicide victims Voytek Frykowski, Abigail Folger, and Jay Sebring on one side, and either Manson himself or his followers Charles "Tex" Watson and Linda Kasabian on the other. Yet another premise suggested is that both the Tate and LaBianca murders were committed as a way to free former Manson associate Bobby Beausoleil from jail by committing "copycat" murders similar to the Gary Hinman slaying that Beausoleil had been arrested for. Finally, there are those who believe (myself included) that the motive was a combination of *all* of the aforementioned factors. Those disclaimers aside, *Helter Skelter* is still very well written and remains as an important and often vital factual record of the Manson murders in many ways. Just be advised that this tome is very much *not* the first and final word on the Manson murders.

• Nikolas Schreck's *The Manson File* - for the *pro-Manson* side of the case. This book is a bit outdated now, but still has interesting information relating to some of the more obscure angles in the Manson saga, including essays and quotations written by or attributed to Manson himself, sidebar issues of interest that include many strange coincidences and synchronicities, and discussions of noteworthy people who were on the scene at the time of the crimes.

• Ed Sanders' *The Family* - for the *ultra-conspiratorial* side of the case. Although this book is a bit too wacky at times, it still has worth as a research guide, particularly for the background information that it supplies regarding Manson's early years prior to the murders. Just be prepared to take many things found in it with several large grains of salt,

especially wherever the author attempts to make Satanic cult and other occult-type connections to the Manson crimes. (Look for the rare first edition copy with the chapter on the Process Church in it).

Other books and film that I recommend would include Paul Watkins' *My Life With Charles Manson*, Charles "Tex" Watson's *Will You Die For Me? The Man Who Killed For Charles Manson Tells His Own Story*, Karlene Faith's *The Long Prison Journey of Leslie Van Houten*, Jess Bravin's *Squeaky: The Life and Times of Lynette Alice Fromme*, the 1972 documentary film *Manson* by Laurence Merrick & Robert Hendrickson, and the television documentary *A&E Biography*, *Charles Manson - Journey into Evil*.

Additionally, one should not forget to check the Internet for both historical and real-time information supplied by the various Manson websites, message boards and blogs. There are numerous good ones out there that are worth your time and any good Internet search engine will take you right to them.

One thing that I want to make clear to the readers of this essay is that I do not consider myself to be either "pro-Manson" or "anti-Manson." To date, most of those who have written about the Manson case have taken either a pro or anti-Manson stance, with the majority weighted toward the "anti" side. This essay differs from those past efforts in that I strive to take a sort of "middle ground." I felt that I could not write this work using any other method and within these pages, I strive to remain as honest to that ideal as possible. To quote Virginia Woolfe, "If you do not tell the truth about yourself you cannot tell it about other people." Understandably, some readers may find this approach to be disconcerting, but I am at all times *pro-truth*. This "middle ground" approach of mine is, in essence, a willingness to give credit where credit is due. I am reminded here of yet another quote, this one from George Orwell, who wrote, "In a time of universal deceit, telling the truth becomes a revolutionary act."

Why the middle ground? I have studied this case for years and have come to the realization that Manson is not the ultimate bogeyman that the media has made him out to be, nor is he the infallible, super mystically-attuned, guru of gurus as others would have you believe. The truth lies somewhere balanced in between those two extremes. Within these pages, I do at times place myself in the position where I play Devil's advocate (no pun intended) to Manson's ideas for argument's sake. There are also instances where it may appear that an admiration on my part is showing through where I am trying to convey to the reader how I think Manson's thought processes work. And I will admit there are aspects of Manson's philosophy that, at times, I actually *agree* with and occasionally, those beliefs even parallel my own. This is because I truly

believe that anyone who undertakes a genuinely objective and dispassionate examination of Manson's beliefs will find that there are certain instances where his insight into things existential and metaphysical are actually quite remarkable. As noted above, I have studied this case closely over many years and know enough about the same abstract ideas to be willing to admit when and where Manson's observations about society, life and philosophy are valid. To deny that validity does, in a very real sense, play directly into Manson's hands.

Additionally, I also believe that, to some degree, the trial of Manson and his three female codefendants was as much for the murders they were accused of committing, as it was for the alternative lifestyle they engaged in and the anti-establishment stance that they held. (A full discussion of this topic can be found in the section of this book, titled, *The Summer of Love Breeds a Season of Hate: The Effects of the Manson Murders on Public Perceptions of the Hippie Lifestyle*).

Finally, I cannot stress enough that I am strongly opposed to the use of violence, except in the most extreme circumstances or in self-defense, and that I abhor any forms of racism or misogyny. Basing my judgment on all of the evidence I have seen to date, those are *all* things that Manson appears to either believe in, indulge in, tolerate and/or has espoused in the past. It is precisely there that Manson and I part company.

This essay seeks to explore some provocative, yet intriguing questions, specifically, could Manson be considered a true counter-culture revolutionary? Was he actually a well-intentioned, but ultimately misunderstood guru whose followers took it upon themselves to murder for him? Or was he, as the prosecutor at his murder trial portrayed him, simply a crazed cult leader and career criminal? It is my contention that Manson is a varied combination of all of those things. Just exactly where it all begins, converges, morphs, and ends is among the many enigmas of this case.

What follows here are simply my musings on certain aspects of the case, a few interesting anecdotes, rumors, speculations, and urban legends about the Manson saga.

A Man Called Manson

That Manson inspired and continues to inspire fear in the establishment is a given, and when one begins to seek to truly understand exactly what Manson's beliefs actually consist of, it becomes immediately apparent that inspiring and maintaining such fear is at that philosophy's core.

Fear Turns Charlie On

Manson believes fear is a beneficial thing. He preached to his followers that developing and maintaining a high level of fear was central to the effort of becoming a super-aware or "tuned-in" person. Manson talked often about "getting the fear," a state of being that he described as being in a condition of total paranoia because, in Manson's own words, "total paranoia is total awareness." Manson further described the person who is totally aware as having "Come to Now," a level of consciousness where - like the desert coyotes of Death Valley that he held in such high regard - one "hears every sound, smells every smell, sees everything that moves." Such a person who achieves that level of awareness is, as described by Manson, "in the thought." (It is important to understand that the condition of total awareness described by Manson as "Coming to Now," is in fact indistinguishable from the phenomenon of ego death and rebirth commonly experienced by both LSD users and certain Zen Buddhists, who have achieved the enlightenment that accompanies the egoless state of being. This concept is discussed in detail later in this essay).

But it appears that Manson, a career criminal and sociopath, was not simply trying to lead his followers toward mere spiritual illumination; he was in fact, also conditioning them to become indifferent to inflicting pain and death. Manson family member Tex Watson, the chief killer in the Tate-LaBianca murders, describes the Manson process of ego death this way:

> "Charlie had made us see that once you die to your ego, once you strip yourself down to a perfect being all body, like some monkey or a coyote free in the wild, not thinking, not willing once you do that, fear doesn't exist anymore. You've already died, everything except that animal body of yours, so even death can't frighten you. You are free. Free to live, free to die. Free to kill." [2]

It must be noted that Manson's personal moral code has deep roots in his adherence to the sort of social Darwinist, "law of the jungle" ethic that is the key to surviving in America's toughest prisons, where having a healthy fear can often make the difference between life and

death. (In fact, one of the many keys to understanding what makes Manson tick is to recognize that he holds that prison "ethic" in very high regard and considers that lesson to be one of the most important of his "fathers." Manson is fond of talking about how he grew up fatherless and as such, he looked for "fatherly" mentoring wherever he could find it. He has often been quoted as saying that certain male figures that he met in prison were "one of my fathers" or that anything that teaches an ultimate lesson, such as the horrors of war, is a "father").

Manson taught his followers that animals were perfect creatures that lived always in "Now" and he urged them to cultivate an animal-like amorality. (*Amorality* is generally described as the quality of having no concept of right or wrong, whether it is the result of a person's early development or because of some intrinsic quality, such as a diagnosis of antisocial personality disorder. For the purpose of this discussion, I am also including those who simply do not subscribe to any *popular moral code*. The latter scenario seems to be, at least in part, Manson's *modus operandi*, in that he consciously has chosen to nurture his strong individualistic inclinations, while simultaneously not seeking to be included into any commonly-accepted structure of ethical behavior). In Manson's view, animals were incapable of "sin" and that when an animal kills, it is something done in complete innocence or, simply as a manifestation of the perfection that is a characteristic of the natural order of the Universe.

Messages in the Music

The Beatles "White Album," which Manson felt had the greatest significance as far as the "messages" he claimed to be receiving are concerned, was released in December of 1968. According to Tex Watson, Manson first began talking about Helter Skelter in early January of 1969 and that subsequently, the Manson family began to make the first physical preparations for Helter Skelter that winter.

That Manson claimed to hear "hidden messages" in the Beatles music is not quite the completely far-fetched notion or singular event that one might at first assume it to be.

All popular music during the 1960's was, for the greater part, heavily censored by the music industry. In order to get around that censorship and insure radio play, artists often made oblique references to taboo subjects such as sex and drug use in their songs.

But those in the hip drug culture of the times, the "tuned-in people," as Manson often referred to them, knew how to look for such references, most of which were not immediately obvious to "straight" society. Examples of these hidden messages in popular songs of the

day include, *Puff the Magic Dragon* by Peter, Paul & Mary (alleged to be about marijuana smoking), *Mellow Yellow* by Donovan (which references a hippie joke about smoking banana peels to get high), *White Rabbit* by Jefferson Airplane (a thinly-disguised reference to the psychedelic experience), *Dr. Robert*, *With a Little Help From My Friends*, and *Lucy in the Sky With Diamonds* by The Beatles (commonly thought to be references to amphetamine, marijuana, and LSD use respectively).

Worth mentioning in this same discussion is the whole "Paul McCartney is Dead" phenomenon: Beginning around September or October of 1969 and lasting for a period of almost six weeks, many fans of Beatle music found themselves deeply immersed in the bizarre rumor that Paul was actually dead and had been secretly replaced by a mysterious double. This early example of a modern urban legend claimed that the Beatles had deliberately made references to Paul's "death" by recording "clues" about it directly into their songs and that there were other clues "hidden in plain sight" on the band's album covers and in their publicity photos. Fans of Beatles music spent hours listening to their records and studying the album covers looking for these "hidden messages" about Paul's alleged death. [3]

The tale above also illustrates just how much of an overall impact the Beatles had on the hip youth culture of the times and that the influence they had on their fans should not be underestimated.

The Beatles were also among the first rock and roll musicians to experiment with LSD and many of their songs were written about the experience. A sampling of LSD-inspired Beatles songs would include: *She Said She Said*, *Tomorrow Never Knows* (with lyrics directly inspired from LSD guru Timothy Leary's book *The Psychedelic Experience*), *Lucy In The Sky With Diamonds*, *Within You Without You*, *Strawberry Fields Forever*, *All You Need Is Love*, *The Inner Light*, *Across The Universe*, and *Rain* (a song with lyrics that were inspired after John Lennon read philosopher Alan Watts' account of his own LSD experiences).

Although most of the LSD references in the songs listed above were rather indirect, people who had used LSD themselves were able to instantly recognize what the Beatles were alluding to, while those who were not "tuned in," i.e., who had not experienced the effects of LSD themselves, could not.

That Manson found corroboration for his own LSD-inspired philosophy in the lyrics of the Beatles songs might explain why he was so willing to believe that there might be hidden references to *other* secrets there. The Beatles songs during that particular time period were full of lyrics that paid tribute to the hippie ideal of practicing peace and believing in love as an all-powerful tool for conquering adversity. Those songs

also reflected the same hippie ideas about “dropping out” or more precisely, living free and conducting one’s life in a manner that, although often directly at odds with the current establishment ideals of how to live, was seen as something both positive and progressive in nature.

Manson has often said that he is not to blame for what the Beatles music was “telling the kids” to do, in essence, implying that it was the *message in the music* that was the impetus behind the violence and not anything that he had personally said or done himself. But to make such a claim is really simplistic in the extreme as I find it hard to believe that such “radical” notions as expressed by true hippie idealism were actually, in any form, shape or fashion, responsible for the brutality that followed. The vast majority of young people from that era quite obviously never thought that the Beatles music was some call to violent action, nor was any other pop music of the time truly considered as such.

But perhaps there *is* a precedent to that suggestion: one could possibly argue that the violent sixties radical group known as the Weather Underground might be a known exception to this idea, given the fact that their very name was taken from the lyric of the Bob Dylan song *Subterranean Homesick Blues*, although that is, admittedly, probably stretching things a bit. (The Weathermen also had an interesting use of LSD, in that they often required their members to take LSD during group sessions as a means to identify possible infiltrators into that group). [4]

In the end, it seems more likely that there was something deep in the psyche of Manson himself that caused him to misconstrue and scramble any Beatles “messages” into such a weird scenario as Helter Skelter.

The Mysterious Motive for Murder

The exact formula or elements that upped the ante on fear and paranoia surrounding Manson and his followers and ultimately leading to the murders is not known to a 100% certainty. Just prior to the murders, Manson underwent a radical and very negative change, a fact that has never been fully explained, but which has been noted by many others who knew Manson at that time. It has been speculated that Manson, possibly out of his frustration at being a failed artist and/or because of a drug burn allegedly involving one of the Tate victims (a theory that is discussed in detail below), decided to drop the peace-loving hippie veneer and simply reverted back to his original criminal roots. Combined with his innate hatred for society fostered by years in the establishment’s prisons, and his seemingly driving need for revenge, we are talking about a rather potent combination.

This sudden change in Manson at that time is one of the lingering mysteries in the case. As some family members who broke free from Manson would later explain, Manson was not always the overly-paranoid person he was later to become. Indeed, former family members have described their own confusion and wonder about the negative changes that seemed to suddenly appear in Manson late in 1969, turning him from a person who was once truly about love, understanding and unity, into a person who suddenly became completely obsessed with fear, death, and murder.

Paul Watkins, a Manson follower who would later write a book about his experiences with Manson and the family, had this to say about Manson prior to the turn to violence:

> [T]he public has always known Charles Manson as a murderer. They did not meet him, as I did, on that evening in March 1968 in Topanga Canyon. When I met him, there was no violence in the Family, no talk of Helter Skelter; in fact, it was the complete opposite, Charlie's love then was real. It had some integrity. But the public met Charlie through the media only after the murders; by then, the whole story was tainted with blood. [5]

And, while discussing the negative changes that later came over Manson with filmmakers Robert Hendrickson and Laurence Merrick, Watkins would lament on camera how, “Everything that everything was for was always for fucking; that’s what it was all for; that’s what everything we did was for, until he [Manson] got on his Helter Skelter trip. Then everything seemed to change.” [6]

One part of the motive may have been Manson’s desire to strike back at record producer Terry Melcher for his failure to come through on recording Manson’s music for an album, an event that Manson allegedly felt would help to kick-start Helter Skelter.

Paul Watkins also described the sudden changes that came over Manson just prior to, and immediately after Manson’s trip to Los Angeles from their Barker Ranch residence in order to secure a record deal:

> One night during a rap, he [Manson] paused in the middle of a sentence and stared straight ahead, as though addressing a presence above our heads.
>
> ‘I came to you,’ he said softly, his face wearing a distracted expression, ‘as a deer in the forest. I came to you with wonder in my eyes and love in my heart for you.

> For you were man and you were God and I could see it. I came to you with love. And you slaughtered me.'
>
> Though it didn't register consciously at the time, his statement was a prophetic one. It was the first sign that the flower child in Charlie Mansion was dying, wilting away in Death Valley by day, freezing by night. Maybe the scorpion had returned to the valley of death where he belonged.
>
> Then, all at once, things changed dramatically. Charlie returned from L.A. and a meeting with Dennis Wilson and Greg Jakobson to discuss the chance of our recording an album. He appeared agitated, yet enthusiastic. He said there was more violence in the city; that the blacks were on the verge of full-scale revolution. 'It's just a matter of time,' he declared. 'The shit's gonna come down . . . it's gonna come down hard.' What was different, however, was Charlie's attitude. Instead of advocating passive resistance, instead of seeking to remain aloof from the impending conflict, he began speaking of the Family's role in it.
>
> 'What we need to do is program the young love to split; when the scene comes down, they're gonna need someplace to go. Well, we got that place. We're here, and we can show the young love where to come. And we can show them with music.'" [7]

That record deal never materialized, and along with that failure, an integral part of Manson's master plan for launching Helter Skelter was thwarted.

The final provocation that seemed to push everything over the edge can probably be traced to the shooting of a black man named Bernard "Lottsapoppa" Crow. According to former followers and researchers who have written about the case, Manson's fears became even more fixated on the black-white race war scenario in the aftermath of the Crowe shooting (a crime that Manson was directly involved with as he was the one who actually pulled the trigger). The Crowe shooting occurred on July 1, 1969; approximately three weeks later on July 27, the murder of musician and drug dealer Gary Hinman took place. And after Manson learned that Bobby Beausoleil had been arrested for the Hinman murder on August 8th, the Tate-LaBianca murders followed on August 9th and 10th.

After the Crowe shooting, the entire scene suddenly became infused and guided by Manson's own personal paranoia and subsequently, he began to tell his followers that the End of the World/Final Apocalypse called Helter Skelter was at hand.

The Tate-LaBianca murders hit Los Angeles like a bombshell and thanks to the high level of sensational and often lurid press coverage, the story also reverberated throughout all of America and the rest of the world. (In order to try to illustrate the impact that the Manson murders had on America at the time they occurred, try to imagine what it would be like if the same thing were to happen today, where the home of some prominent "A List" Hollywood figure was invaded and the inhabitants brutally murdered by a group of killers who were members of some controversial modern youth subculture).

Apocalypse Now in the Heart of Darkness

Writers are fond of pointing out how Manson has become the world's *numero uno* icon of fear (perhaps even more so than modern terrorists such as Osama bin Laden) and no study of the case would be complete without an analysis and commentary on the subject. As *Disinformation* author and webmaster Ralph Metzger so succinctly puts it, "The continuing fascination with Manson is testament enough to his enduring iconic legacy as societal bogeyman." [8]

Indeed, to society, Manson certainly represented, and still represents, the worst of all cultural fears possible: that of the amoral individual who is a renegade and no longer a "company man" or "team player"; one who operates beyond what society considers to be "decent restraint" and control; a person who lives by his own self-created rules. All of those are the same characteristics that are most notable in the madness/genius of the Kurtz characters in both *Heart of Darkness* and *Apocalypse Now* (respectively, Joseph Conrad's classic novella and the film adaptation of the same by Francis Ford Coppola).

Both *Heart of Darkness* and *Apocalypse Now* convey the idea that every human soul inherently has a savage, evil side that remains repressed by "civilized" society and that atrocities are often easily committed when one culture comes into contact with another; that there are boundaries that civilized man should not cross without running the risk of becoming like their enemies in the end. In a vein quite similar to the Manson saga, the Kurtz figure in both stories is "worshipped like a god" by local indigenous people and lone individuals who come into contact with him praise Kurtz' genius for having "enlarged their minds"; where extreme brutality is admired for being "perfect, genuine, complete, crystalline, pure" logic; where Kurtz' refusal to play by the rules of

"normal" society is described as "totally beyond the pale of any acceptable human conduct." [9]

Apocalypse Now is a film about the Vietnam War where an American Army Colonel named Kurtz has become dissatisfied with how the war is being fought. He forms his own army and goes deep into the jungles of Cambodia to fight the war his way *and* by his own rules. The subplot of the film closely examines the dark nether regions of the human psyche and poses important questions concerning the limits that "civilized" men will allow themselves to go to in order to combat "evil." In one of the movie's most memorable scenes, Marlon Brando as Colonel Kurtz relates the following story, one that could easily have been uttered by Charles Manson:

> "I've seen horrors . . . horrors that you've seen. But you have no right to call me a murderer. You have a right to kill me. You have a right to do that, but you have no right to judge me. It's impossible for words to describe what is necessary to those who do not know what horror means. Horror. Horror has a face and you must make a friend of horror. Horror and moral terror are your friends. If they are not then they are enemies to be feared. They are truly enemies. I remember when I was with Special Forces. Seems a thousand centuries ago. We went into a camp to inoculate the children. We left the camp after we had inoculated the children for polio, and this old man came running after us and he was crying. He couldn't see. We went back there and they had come and hacked off every inoculated arm. There they were in a pile. A pile of little arms. And I remember, I . . . I . . . I cried. I wept like some grandmother. I wanted to tear my teeth out. I didn't know what I wanted to do. And I want to remember it. I never want to forget it. I never want to forget. And then I realized like I was shot . . . like I was shot with a diamond, a diamond bullet right through my forehead. And I thought: My God, the genius of that. The genius. The will to do that. Perfect, genuine, complete, crystalline, pure. And then I realized they were stronger than we. Because they could understand that these were not monsters. These were men, trained cadres. These men who fought with their hearts, who had families, who had children, who were filled with love, but they had the strength . . . the strength to do that. If I had ten divisions of those men our troubles here would be over very quickly. You have to have men who are moral and at the same time who are able to utilize their primordial instincts to kill without

> feeling, without passion, without judgment . . . without judgment. Because it's judgment that defeats us.“ [10]

Later in the film Colonel Kurtz is heard to say, "We must kill them. We must incinerate them. Pig after pig. Cow after cow. Village after village. Army after army . . . and they call me an assassin! Well what do you call it when the assassins accuse the assassin?” [11]

And one scene is eerily reminiscent of the many paeans uttered by Manson family members in praise of Charlie: a crazed follower of Colonel Kurtz - played to perfection by Dennis Hopper - speaks of Kurtz in a sort of awe, saying:

> “The man’s enlarged my mind. He's a poet warrior in the classic sense. We are all his children. The man is clear in his mind, but his soul is mad.” [12]

And director Coppola seems to be acknowledging that the Manson case parallels the central theme of his film: In yet another scene from that movie, the character “Chef” reads aloud about Charles Manson's role in the Sharon Tate murders from a newspaper clipping that he has received along with a letter from home that includes Manson’s infamous *Life* magazine photo, saying aloud, “Charles Miller Manson [*sic*] ordered the slaughter of all in a home as a symbol of protest.” [13]

Many other writers have theorized along these same parallel lines. In an essay titled, *The American Meaning of Charley Manson*, author David R. Williams reflects Ralph Metzger’s earlier supposition by making note of Manson’s now iconic position in our culture, stating:

> “Why then is Charlie Manson, as Geraldo Rivera said, ‘the stuff of a nation’s nightmares?’ Not for what he did, nor even for what he said. Others have killed more people more brutally. It is because, as [Joan] Didion foretold, we found in him an icon upon which to project our own latent fears. No one was surprised because everyone knew the potential was there, in each and all of us. So Manson became a living metaphor of *Abaddon*, the God of the bottomless pit. We, as a collective culture, looked into Manson’s eyes and saw in those dark caves what we most feared within ourselves, the paranoia of what might happen if you go too far. He was the monster in the wilderness, the shadow in the night forest, the beast said to lurk in the *Terra Incognita* beyond the edges of the map. By projecting our

> monsters onto Manson, and then locking him up for life, we imagined we had put the beast back in its cage. [14]

But it is not just Manson's radical ideas that make him unique in the annals of the outlaw or modern heretic. Rather, it is his willingness to continue to follow his version of the "truth," coupled with his steadfast refusal to *repent* that is of equal importance to the discussion here. Further along in the same essay cited above, Williams takes that observation deeper by addressing Manson's absolute refusal to acquiesce to society's demands:

> [W]hat makes [Manson] an antinomian [a person who refuses to accept established moral laws] rather than simply a lawless thug and 'mass murdering dog' is that his deeds and words are buttressed by an implicitly antinomian philosophy. He constructed a belief system and believed it and preached it. Another con-man could be easily ignored, but Manson has proven himself faithful to his beliefs. He is not faking them to get out; instead, his refusal to abandon them keeps him locked up tightly in jail." [15]

Williams also notes that Manson's "true crime" is the fact that he so thoroughly destroyed the existing paradigm by not just merely blurring reality, but by completely obliterating the line between what is real and what is purely of the mind, stating, "[H]e crossed over to the other side, completely outside society. [T]o some this is the meaning of insanity, to believe things outside the circle of what society allows. 'Crazy' becomes a label applied to those who don't agree with the consensus." [16]

Another line from Coppola's *Apocalypse Now*, uttered by Martin Sheen as the character Captain Benjamin L. Willard, sums that sentiment up quite neatly:

> "Never get out of the boat. Absolutely goddamn right. Unless you were goin' all the way. Kurtz got off the boat. He split from the whole fuckin' program." [17]

There is no doubt that Manson now represents the Ultimate Rebel: he is a person who gleefully advocates the dissolution of all mental and moral boundaries; he is an unfettered and wild Dionysian spirit guided only by pure instinct; a person without adherence to consensus reason or institutional beliefs; a person who fully believes himself to be *the* spokesperson for "Ultimate Truth" in our society.

As such, it seems that the writers are correct when they state that it is Manson's status as the *ultimate icon of fear* that continues to give the case its longevity and ability to linger forever in the public consciousness.

X Marks the Alienated Spot

Perhaps it can also be inferred that the Manson phenomenon is simply some sort of Nietzschean "will to power" in which Manson (who claims to have studied Nietzsche) has recognized his actions as being "beyond good and evil" and thusly, outside of standard moral interpretation. (According to prosecutor Vincent Bugliosi, Manson himself has implied that this is the case). [18]

It should be noted that while Manson is serving time in prison because he was convicted for his role in the conspiracy to commit the Tate-LaBianca and other murders, it may actually be Manson's *total rejection of our rules and laws* which constitute his greatest "crime." As noted in the documentary film, *Charles Manson Superstar*, it is Manson's complete denunciation of everything that our society consists of and stands for that may qualify him for the title of "the last true heretic of our time." [19]

A heretic is defined as "one who dissents from an accepted belief or doctrine." In older times, heresy usually took the form of a rejection of the religious dogma of a particular civilization and was considered to be the ultimate transgression that is was possible for a human being to engage in. Such heretics were often literally burned at the stake.

Manson is a *heretic among heretics*. His infamous "I have X'ed myself from your world" statement and action, in which he carved a bloody X into his forehead to demonstrate that the court at his murder trial had no jurisdiction over him (his followers later followed suit), made it quite clear that he believes himself to not be subject to "man's law," but rather to what he calls "God's law" or the "Ultimate Truth" (a spiritual concept that is very familiar to those who have experienced the visions imparted by the powerful effects of LSD).

The full text of the "X'ed myself from your world" statement, issued as a street communiqué by Manson, is as follows:

> "I have X'ed myself from your world. You have created the monster. I am not of you, from you, nor do I condone your unjust attitude toward things, animals, and people that you do not try to understand. I stand opposed to what you do and have done in the past. You make fun of god and have murdered the world in the name of Jesus

> Christ. My faith in me is stronger than all of your armies, governments, gas chambers, or anything you may want to do to me. I know what I have done. Your courtroom is man's game. Love is my judge." [20]

Manson also mocks what he sees as our society's hypocrisy in the romanticizing of the rebel and the outlaw, whose unbridled freedom we secretly envy on the one hand, while on the other, we seek to condemn those (such as Charles Manson) who have taken that idea to its ultimate, outer boundaries.

The Legion of Charlies

On a similar note, Manson has always enjoyed laying bare other obvious hypocrisies prevalent in our society, with one of the most blatant being that, while we as a society hold that killing in a war is *not* a crime, killing under virtually any other set of circumstances *is*.

As pointed out to me by Manson researcher John Aes-Nihil, that same double standard is the central theme found in the rare underground comic book classic, *The Legion of Charlies*,[21] in which the Manson murders are compared to the brutal murders commonly known as the "My Lai Massacre." [22]

The My Lai massacre is the true story of a vicious four-hour ordeal that occurred on March 16, 1968 during the Vietnam War. In this horrific incident, over 500 unarmed Vietnamese civilians - primarily women, children and the elderly - were systematically raped, tortured and murdered by American soldiers near the tiny Vietnamese village of My Lai. The chief perpetrator in those horrific crimes was one Lieutenant William Calley, who had ordered the men in his platoon to carry out the killings. (The official military name of Calley's platoon was "Charlie Company," a detachment actively engaged in searching out the Viet Cong, or "Victor Charlie," as they were known in military parlance - minor facts that lend a real taste of irony to the discussion here).

Calley was convicted and sentenced to life in prison for twenty-two counts of premeditated murder. He would claim at his trial that he was simply following orders from his captain when he ordered the deaths. The arrest, trial and conviction of Calley took place during virtually the same time frame as the Manson murder trial and raised moral and ethical issues of culpability that very closely paralleled that of the "Manson massacre."

Only one day after having been sentenced to life in prison, President Richard Nixon would order Calley to be released from custody and would ultimately grant him a full pardon.[23] (As students of the

Manson case will recall, Nixon was the same man who had declared Manson's guilt while the Tate-LaBianca trial was barely underway).[24]

From an essay titled, *An Introduction to the My Lai Courts-Martial* comes the following graphic account of one of the more disturbing acts of brutality that occurred at My Lai:

> "Calley ordered the dozen or so platoon members there to push the people into the ditch, and three or four GIs did. Calley ordered his men to shoot into the ditch. Some refused, others obeyed. One who followed Calley's order was Paul Meadlo, who estimated that he killed about twenty-five civilians. (Later Meadlo was seen, head in hands, crying). Calley joined in the massacre. At one point, a two-year-old child who somehow survived the gunfire began running towards the hamlet. Calley grabbed the child, threw him back in the ditch, then shot him. On September 5, 1969, Calley was charged with premeditated murder in the deaths of over 100 Vietnamese civilians near the village of My Lai. On March 29, 1971, Calley was convicted for the premeditated murder of twenty-two of those civilians as part of his role in the massacre and was subsequently sentenced to life in prison. Evidence presented at his trial showed that Calley had ordered the men in his platoon to shoot everyone in the village. During the course of the trial, Calley underwent several psychological exams. Although it was not brought out during testimony, several of those mental health doctors confided that Calley told them that he 'thought of killing the Vietnamese people in the same way he thought of killing animals.' A portion of Calley's trial testimony gives yet another perspective on his state of mind: 'I was ordered to go in there and destroy the enemy. That was my job on that day. That was the mission I was given. I did not sit down and think in terms of men, women and children. They were all classified the same, and that was the classification that we dealt with, just as enemy soldiers.' Part of Calley's defense was the claim that he was merely following the orders of Capt. Ernest Medina, his commanding officer. On April 1, 1971, only three days after he was sentenced, President Nixon ordered that Calley be released from prison and eventually, granted him a full pardon. (Calley would serve only 3 1/2 years of his life sentence - not in prison, but while confined to his military living quarters while under house arrest)." [25]

A psychiatric report indicated that Calley believed that he was not killing human beings but "rather that they were animals with whom one could not speak or reason." That sort of dehumanizing sentiment is a true glimpse into the very heart of darkness and very closely parallels that of Charlie Manson, who often referred to establishment figures as "pigs" or "plastic face mannequins."

The noted contrast between these two crimes is, of course, how two incidents of such completely immoral and brutal acts of murder can be viewed in such different perspectives by our society: one is roundly condemned and its perpetrators sentenced to death, while the other appears to have been given official sanction and its perpetrators set free. The message that one gets is this: All violence not officially sanctioned by the government is labeled as either criminal or mentally ill behavior.

As John Aes-Nihil stated to me in an email, “This whole thing (referring to the murders committed by both Manson and Calley) is really just a philosophical discourse and ultimately a game of semantics, with “reality” merely being that which occurs at any given moment in time, and as to *why* it occurs, just a bunch of conjecture.” [26]

Manson has always pointed out that it is easy for us to accept those aspects of the will to power that our cultural value system has labeled as "positive," while tending to de-emphasize that same concept’s more unpleasant features. To again quote Ralph Metzger:

> “[I] do see Manson's place in American society as an important one: because underneath it all, beyond the hype of ‘the most evil man alive,’ Charles Manson has a pivotal role in the cosmic play as a teller of unpleasant truths . . . a warped witch doctor, a hillbilly exorcist, a white trash shaman.” [27]

The suggestion here is that Manson, like Nietzsche before him, merely points out that the concepts of “good" and "evil" are nothing more than a dominant culture’s moral analysis applied to observable facts that he believes are a natural part of human existence. In a very real sense, I feel that Manson has transcended the ideals of “normal” society and has become something very much like Nietzsche’s *Ubermensch*. (Whether that is a good or bad thing is left to you, the reader, to decide).

Here is what I believe is a good summation of the same statement above, only in Manson’s own words: “I don’t break laws. I make the laws. I am the lawmaker.” [28]

The Roots of Manson's Philosophy

In the book *The Manson File*, editor Nikolas Schreck suggests that corporate media interests have always had a financial stake in creating and maintaining societal scarecrows, particularly where the creation of the whole Manson myth is concerned. Schreck points out that rather than openly discussing or trying to understand the nature of Manson's beliefs, such media interests dismiss the elements of Manson's *raison d'etre* (reason for being) and instead, pander almost exclusively to the public's "salacious" interests, while simultaneously engaging in "moralistic tongue-clucking." He writes:

> "Is it possible to peer behind the monumental edifice of the Manson myth, that fiction forever frozen in time by the famous *Life* magazine cover of December 19, 1969? What is the reality behind the provocative clichés of hypnotic powers, drug crazed teenage sex-slaves, brutally killed blonde starlets (the stuff that marketing executives' dreams are made of?)
>
> Let us make a bold speculation. Perhaps NBC, CBS, ABC, the *Los Angeles Times*, Vincent Bugliosi and most of the other supposed purveyors of truth had allowed interests more pecuniary than ethical to rule in their creation of the Manson mythos. We have all heard, for instance, that Manson possesses a "dangerous philosophy." Dangerous? In what way? And to whom? Of what, exactly, does the philosophy consist?" [29]

Anyone who has read the book *Helter Skelter* has explored the theory that Manson based his philosophy on parts of the Christian Bible, the Beatles song lyrics, aspects of Scientology, such Eastern religious ideas as karma and reincarnation, and possibly even what can be loosely defined as "occult" practices. But whether or not those factors - in any amount and combination you choose to mix and match for your own theory - were the *prime elements* in Manson's beliefs is very much still open to debate.

Manson On Acid

One area that is often not subjected to the close scrutiny that it should be is Manson's philosophy as it is related to the use of LSD. It is my own opinion that the real key to understanding Manson's beliefs is primarily rooted in the LSD experience.

LSD is an incredibly powerful drug. Mild to moderate effects can be felt with as little as 10-20 micrograms. A full-blown LSD experience is

usually brought on by dosages in the 50-150 microgram range. (These days modern "blotter acid" contains anywhere from 30-100 micrograms). It is important to note here that during the height of the hippie era and particularly in the Haight-Ashbury scene, the typical dosage of an LSD "hit" was much higher than it is today, with a typical tab of "Owsley" acid often containing as much as 500 to even 1000 micrograms. [30]

One user described the extraordinarily powerful effects of the LSD that was commonly available in the 1960s with the sort of awe that the drug regularly invoked among its early users:

> If there was one thing LSD was not - and I do not refer to today's light mood enhancer - it was not *just a drug*. It has never ceased to amaze me that such a minute dosage, one appearing to pass completely from the somatic system long before the experience subsides, can produce such an effect. It has been called the psychological equivalent of the nuclear bomb. [31]

According to my research, it was not uncommon for Manson family members to take multiple tabs of this high-octane LSD and doses that high can quite literally "blow your mind," to use the old descriptive phrase of psychedelic users from the 1960s.

Dr. Albert Hoffman first synthesized LSD in 1938. Working as a research chemist for Sandoz Pharmaceuticals in Basel, Switzerland, Hoffman was experimenting with preparations of ergot (a type of fungus that attacks rye grain) in the hope of creating a drug to use as a circulatory stimulant. His 25th synthesis of the compound produced LSD-25. He would shelve that particular project until the spring of 1943 when a "peculiar presentiment" concerning that 25th LSD synthesis overtook him. In Hoffman's own words:

> "I could not forget the relatively uninteresting LSD-25. A peculiar presentiment - the feeling that this substance could possess properties other than those established in the first investigations - induced me, five years after the first synthesis, to produce LSD-25 once again so that a sample could be given to the pharmacological department for further tests." [32]

On April 16, 1943, Hoffman accidentally either inhaled or absorbed through his fingertips a very minute amount of the LSD. Feeling dizzy and thinking that he was coming down with a cold, Hoffman left work and began pedaling his bicycle home. In what students of psychedelic lore now refer to as the "Magic Bicycle Ride," Hoffman

experienced the full effects of the first ever LSD “trip.” Hoffman describes the incident:

> Last Friday, April 16, 1943, I was forced to interrupt my work in the laboratory in the middle of the afternoon and proceed home, being affected by a remarkable restlessness, combined with a slight dizziness. At home I lay down and sank into a not unpleasant intoxicated like condition, characterized by an extremely stimulated imagination. In a dreamlike state, with eyes closed (I found the daylight to be unpleasantly glaring), I perceived an uninterrupted stream of fantastic pictures, extraordinary shapes with intense kaleidoscopic play of colors. After some two hours, this condition faded away. [33]

LSD invokes a common experience in its users in the form of the phenomenon known as “ego death.” People who have undergone ego death will tell you that it can sometimes be an extremely frightening experience and one that is as close to what it feels like to actually “die” as it is possible to do without really dying. Common aspects of this “death” include the user feeling that he/she is losing one’s grip on, or no longer has normal control of the ego; where the normal day to day personality has disappeared and the growing sensation that the “self” no longer really exists or that it is slowly dissolving away into some nothingness. As a result, fear and panic can sometimes occur when a user feels the normal sense of “who they are” slipping away. (The ego seems to have a built-in mechanism for staying identified with what is “known.” It is for that very reason that later advocates of the use of LSD, Timothy Leary in particular, stressed the importance of “set and setting” to minimize the sometimes overwhelming fear and subsequent psychic trauma involved with the LSD ego death experience). [34]

However, once this ego death has passed, the user experiences a “rebirth” into what is often called “the Clear Light of the Void, “the “Ultimate Truth” and "Ultimate Reality.” This “clear light” is a place and state of being that is of literally indescribable beauty and peace; where the person undergoing the experience feels that they have achieved the transcendence of all space-time dimensions, and have been freed entirely from the limitations of the ego. A person in this state often feels that for the very first time in their lives, they are part of some Grand Order of the Universe and are now “one” with everything in cosmic unity. (And it is not unusual for people who find themselves immersed in the Clear Light to report having a conversation with “God” or some supreme being).[35]

The ego death caused by LSD use is remarkably similar to what is termed as a "Near Death Experience," or NDE. A “typical” NDE experience can be triggered by clinical death during surgery, or as a result of medical trauma from which a person recovers, as well as from unusually intense dreams, extreme stress, some forms of meditation, seizures, and even during orgasm.

Manifestations of an NDE involve an experience where the person undergoing it feels that they have left their body (an “out of body experience” or OBE) and has passed over to the “other side.” There the person often finds themselves traveling down a long tunnel that has a light at the end of it. Once the person emerges into the light, they often encounter dead relatives, alien beings, or unseen presences that they sense are god-like or divine beings. Persons who have experienced an NDE also report a deep sense of peace, mental alertness, and a feeling that they are at one with the Universe.

The Beatles described both the ego death experience and the “Clear Light” phenomenon in many of their musical compositions: In the song *She Said, She Said*, John Lennon sings about an LSD trip he took with actor Peter Fonda, who kept babbling on to Lennon about how his first trip was so intense that “he knew what it was like to be dead.” In the song, Lennon describes the fear he felt in hearing Fonda’s words (just as he was beginning to experience the effects of some LSD he had taken and as his own ego was disintegrating) with the song lyric, “And you're making me feel like I've never been born." And Beatle George Harrison was describing the peak of the LSD experience in the song, *Within You, Without You*, when he wrote, “When you've seen beyond yourself, then you may find peace of mind is waiting there. And the time will come when you see we're all one and life goes on within you and without you.”

As discussed earlier, Manson’s belief that he was “receiving messages” from the Beatles through their song lyrics is not as completely weird as it may seem at first glance - at least not in part. LSD use was not simply a driving force within the hippie movement; at times it actually served as the brick and mortar that held it together. One must keep in mind that the use of LSD was a very new thing at that time and taking LSD was, as Haight-Ashbury historian Charles Perry put it, like “being in a secret society,” where only the most “tuned in” people shared the “forbidden knowledge” discovered by the use of LSD. This “silent conspiracy” was largely due to the illegal status of the drug; dropping acid was most certainly not something that users discussed in an open and casual forum, nor was LSD use even written about in the same way that other new “mind-expanding” drugs might be discussed today. [36]

A perfect example of this sort of wink, wink, nod, nod cryptic acknowledgment of LSD use during that time is best illustrated in the Jimi

Hendrix song *Are You Experienced?* I can tell you from my own personal experience that most "squares" and "straights" at that time had no clue just exactly what Jimi was talking about in that song and the majority thought that Hendrix's words were merely some vague sexual reference. But the "tuned in" people *knew*.

Charles Perry also makes note of one of the most compelling features of a full-blown LSD trip, that being the attainment of enlightenment, satori, or "instant Zen" that accompanies the death of the ego:

> "[The effects of LSD brings the user] right up to a featureless experience called the [Clear] Light, in which all details are equally important and all connections equally valid. In a sea of perpetually changing impressions, the meaning of anything can differ wildly from moment to moment. The exaltation of being stoned might be the dawn of birth, the moment of death or a mystical unity of the two. The world might be the play of eternal archetypes or nothing but the moment-to-moment flashing of spontaneous energy. A place might disclose its utter uniqueness, or it might reveal itself as being beyond time and space. This is what people mean when they speak of LSD hallucinations - not full-fledged visions of things that are not there, but extraordinary and uncontrollably shifting interpretations of things that are.
>
> But [the LSD experience is] more than an intellectual challenge. The exaltation of the high has no real parallel in ordinary life, either in intensity or duration. Since the high is bound up with the perception of real things, unlike, for example, the effects of heroin, people coming down from LSD often feel that they have been unfairly cast out of a state of mind that is their birthright, and hence they go questing for a way to recover that experience . . . LSD tends to form cabals of initiates." [37]

In a nutshell, the psychedelic experience or "LSD equation" can be stated as this: ego death = emergence into the "Clear Light" (full awareness) = attainment of true enlightenment or Love/Understanding. (For the non-initiated, it should be pointed out that the egoless state is desirable because it gives the mind freedom from illusion. According to Buddhism, the attainment of the egoless state is also the precise moment a person realizes their own divine nature. This is where they experience a subsequent emergence into ultimate reality, absolute truth,

or Nirvana, the highest spiritual plane that one can obtain, as it frees one from suffering and fear of death). [38]

Manson described this same LSD-induced ego death in more basic terms, noting that the often highly magnified and intense fear that LSD users feel during that process eventually resulted in finally breaking free of that fear (surrendering to the "death") and the "Coming to Now," or the attainment of true awareness. And a person who had "Come to Now," was thus "In the Thought" or filled with the Love/Understanding of Ultimate Truth.

But perhaps from his own personal *Heart of Darkness*, Manson was said to have preached to his followers that the act of killing someone was actually an act of love based on how a person ultimately judge's him or herself. Manson believed that all people had the potential for both good and evil, i.e., that they carried both "Christ and Satan" within themselves and that each of us has the capacity to offer either life to another human being, in "Christ-like" wisdom, or to act on a "Satanic" impulse to kill them. In this extreme reasoning, both were seen as acts of love because both were judgments made within that same "Universal" understanding.

Manson taught his followers that there was no such thing as a separation between life and death, that all things in life are linked to each other. Accordingly, a person who killed another was only killing a part of his or herself or simply striking out at their own reflection in the cosmic mirror. (The idea that all humans are part of one undivided totality is a bit of wisdom that obviously stems from the LSD-inspired "we are all one" revelation and egoless state commonly experienced by users of that psychedelic drug).

Tex Watson, a male member of the Manson family who was the chief killer in the Tate-LaBianca murders, put it this way:

> "Love was always the key word: love as nothingness, love as death. Each night the Family would eat together, smoke a little grass or hash, often drop acid. Then after the meal we'd all sit in a circle to listen to Charlie sing his songs and preach to us. He called it deprogramming, that is, stripping away all the untruth and ego and confusion that our parents and our society had laid on us from the moment we were born, stripping it away to get back to a purity and nothingness that was ours when we first came into the world. [E]verything was one, he said. The programming which our personal histories had built into us put barriers between us and the realization of that oneness, kept us broken in separate fragments torn from

> our connection with the Whole. We kept seeing "you" and "me," when in reality there was only "it," the one. The only way to break down those barriers between ourselves (or the fantasy of self) and true oneness, true unity, was love. [O]nce you were dead in the head, you could truly love because there was nothing left of you, nothing but the oneness which was love itself to fill the void. When you were one it no longer mattered if this or that part of the Whole died, if you died or if someone else died, because the Whole remained. As bizarre as Charlie's teaching might sound to an outsider, it was compelling to us. The more acid we took and the more we listened, the more obvious and inevitable it all seemed. It was not just a matter of belief, either. We lived it, we experienced what Charlie talked about." [39]

In the book *Helter Skelter*, prosecutor Vincent Bugliosi, while attempting to investigate the Tate-LaBianca murders, sought to interview as many people as possible concerning the core elements of Manson's philosophy. To that effort, he interviewed former Manson follower and close confidant of Manson's, Paul Watkins. Bugliosi writes:

> "One aspect of Manson's philosophy especially puzzled me: his strange attitude toward fear. He not only preached that fear was beautiful, he often told the Family that they should live in a constant state of fear. What did he mean by that? I asked Paul.
>
> To Charlie fear was the same thing as awareness, Watkins said. The more fear you have, the more awareness, hence the more love. When you're really afraid, you come to 'Now'. And when you are at Now, you are totally conscious.
>
> Manson claimed that children were more aware than adults, because they were naturally afraid. But animals were even more aware than people, he said, because they always live at Now. The coyote was the most aware creature there was, Manson maintained, because he was completely paranoid. Being frightened of everything he missed nothing.
>
> Charlie was always 'selling fear,' Watkins continued. He wanted people to be afraid, and the more afraid the better. Using this same logic, 'Charlie said that death was beautiful because people feared death.'" [40]

As such, the “Manson LSD equation” can be stated as: Fear (ego death) = “Coming to Now” (full awareness) = Love/Understanding.

A list of the core elements of Manson’s philosophy that were most likely directly inspired by LSD includes:

• A belief that we are all part of the same “Cosmic Whole.”

• A belief that time is only an illusion and is only really relevant to the moment that we live in.

• A utopian belief that everything belongs to everybody, so you can’t steal what is already yours. (Manson believed that human beings have inherent rights to the fruits of the planet. Subsequently, he taught his followers that you cannot steal what has been given to every living creature by birthright and what essentially belongs to us all).

The ultimate “secret” that LSD imparts to the user is the knowledge that freedom on this planet is complete; that there really are no rules except those of basic survival; that the ones created by men are sometimes in direct opposition to human nature; that life is essentially a “blank check” that one can write in any way one chooses.

And therein lies “the rub” and ultimately, the true measure of the character of the person who receives such knowledge: For what one does with such unlimited freedom is *the purest of ethical tests* and the true measure of what really lies inside your own soul.

It should be pointed out that during the same time period, there were many other active “hippie” groups quite similar to the Manson family. Those groups also lived communally, took drugs, engaged in alternative sexual practices, and a few were even very, very angry at the “establishment.” And quite often, those groups were led by a single charismatic individual in what could be described as the same sort of “personality cult” that the Manson family was. Author Jay Stevens, while describing the evolution of the hippie quest for meaningful spiritual paths, makes note that the Manson family represented an extreme exception to the accepted ideal:

> “Consumer choice, in the grand American tradition, had come to the private revolution. Following the Summer of Love, the hippie ethic . . . fractionated into a dozen different sects and cults, each with its own techniques for accessing the Other World. The deeper hippies, the ones who hadn't come to the Haight for a lark, began chanting and meditating; they sat down and finally read all those arcane Tibetan texts they'd bought at the

> Psychedelic Shop. A surprising number joined the Hare Krishnas, one of the most ascetic and dogmatic sects around. Others gravitated to various gurus (the Maharishi and Meher Baba were popular) or followed charismatic hippies, either good ones like Steve Gaskin, or tragic ones like Charlie Manson, whose little family would become a mocking paradigm of Leary's tribal vision." [41]

To date, my own research has not uncovered any other hippie group that went so far astray from the "peace and love" ethic as the Manson family did, or who at any time, made the decision to immerse themselves so completely in crime or choose to strike out at the authorities in such a violent manner as the Manson family did.

That fact alone is the greatest indicator of just how singular an event the Manson murders were and that it was not the hippie lifestyle *per se* that was to blame, but rather Manson's manipulation and abuse of the trust and faith that his followers had placed in him. [42]

The Post-Apocalyptic Manson

One often hears the remark from people who have watched one of the many post-conviction interviews that Manson has given over the years to various media figures (such as Tom Snyder and Geraldo Rivera) that Manson must be completely crazy. Those people usually reach that instant conclusion after witnessing Manson either talk in his famous gibberish, or after hearing him utter lines in the middle of a straightforward dialogue that just seem to be completely off the wall.

And they may be right to some extent, but personally, I think that Manson's "craziness" is in reality more inline with the old euphemism *crazy like a fox*, i.e., that Manson seeks to *purposely* confound, perplex, trick, and belittle certain interviewers and subsequently, the general public who tune in for the show.

It is important to understand that one must view those particular antics of Manson's in the full context of the atmosphere in which the interview is being conducted. If one listens very closely to what Manson says *and* if one understands a great deal about what makes Manson tick, it will soon become obvious that Manson will often "play as crazy as needed" in direct relation to who the person conducting the interview is. This is especially true when it concerns how much respect or lack thereof Manson has for a particular interviewer. After having studied his "speeches" for some time, it is obvious to me that the less Manson likes an interviewer, the more often he will attempt to shine them on in that manner, or perhaps, simply treat them like square johns or children.

But make no mistake, Manson is actually a fairly astute philosopher and understands highly complex and abstract ideas in a way that is often absolutely amazing to behold, and many people have attested to this. It is also worth noting that Manson attracted a great many highly intelligent people into his inner circle, some with advanced college degrees, people who were well-versed in spiritual and religious studies, or who possessed similar intellectual credentials. That is not something that a purely "crazy man" would have been able to do.

Another thing that seems to be frequently misunderstood about Manson is the swastika that he has tattooed on his forehead and exactly what that symbol ultimately means to Manson. Manson has been quoted as saying that the swastika symbol is, "My father. It is the Second World War." What he seems to be alluding to is that the swastika/Second World War is where, as a child of that particular generation, he learned his "ultimate moral lesson," i.e., what our society judges to be an acceptable line of behavior in dealing with one's enemies. Manson will often point out that the swastika/Second World War is the "father of his generation," just as the lessons of the Vietnam War, the Iraq War, and so on, is to other generations. Since Manson believes that fear is the prime motivating force in the Universe, for him, the swastika represents not just Nazism, but also his generation's worst fear, all encased in one compact symbol.

Manson also sees the swastika as the Universal Life symbol. The Hopi Indians - a race of people whom Manson held in high regard - used the swastika for just that purpose. (Remember that it was the Hopi Indian legend of an underground city in the desert that inspired Manson to look for the Devil's Hole or Bottomless Pit in Death Valley). The Hopi swastika is an ancient emblem that symbolized the Infinite, the beginning-less and endless motion of life, cycling periods of time, and spiraling cosmic forces, all that which awakens Universal life.

The swastika is believed by some scholars to date back as far as 10,000 years (long prior to it being misappropriated and maligned by Hitler and the Nazis) and strangely, has served as an important religious symbol among many far-flung cultures that had absolutely *no contact* with each other. For example, the swastika has been found on ancient temples in China and Tibet *and* on Native American religious artifacts. Symbolically, the swastika is often associated with the sun and its power, with its intersecting arms signifying sudden flashes of inspiration on the path to self-realization. According to some Buddhist sects, the swastika symbolizes that which has no beginning or end and is suggestive of the infinite peace of a balanced and enlightened mind. Buddhists so honored the swastika that it is inscribed on the chest of images of the Buddha. The swastika is found frequently in Buddhist temples and on

objects of art. It symbolizes the ceaseless activity of the universal life principle in the ever-evolving cosmos and represents the wheel of the law or teaching.

Manson, often in his usual cryptic way, will sometimes tell an interviewer that his use of the swastika is his way of pointing out what he sees as society's willingness to project their ultimate worst fear onto a symbol. As noted above, he does this by declaring the swastika to be "a symbol of his father, the Second World War," in which the Nazis, led by Hitler, were defeated, but only by the violence fueled by society's fear. Manson believes that all wars are merely the final result of a dominator society's reaction to an ultimate fear. When asked by Geraldo Rivera about the swastika, Manson replied, "How do you have peace on Earth? How do you communicate to a whole group of people? You stand up and take the worst fear symbol there is and say, there, now I've got your fear. And your fear is your power and your power is your control. I'm your king of this whole planet." [43]

Rumor Has It

In my book, *Labyrinth13*, I discuss some of the interesting similarities between Manson's philosophy and the beliefs of the Process Church of the Final Judgment, as well as the rumor that there was some sort of working relationship between Manson and the Process. I essentially dismissed those connections as having been primarily of a coincidental nature, but it is always interesting to note such synchronicities and to explore them in-depth. [44]

There have also been quite a few efforts by some researchers to link the Manson murders to larger conspiracies involving elements within the American spy and intelligence agencies. While most of this theorizing must be taken with several huge grains of salt, there are some factors, such as the idea of *mind control*, that make such speculation seem plausible. Certainly Manson himself proved that actual mind control *is* possible. Again in *Labyrinth13*, I discuss alleged secret government projects to create mind-controlled assassins and touch briefly on the Manson case there, theorizing how Manson was able to program his followers, and where he may have picked up such techniques. While such speculation can be an interesting intellectual exercise, I will admit that I included my musings about the Manson family and mind control in that discussion almost purely for the entertainment value. [45]

Roman Polanski, husband of murder victim Sharon Tate, once commented to a Tate-LaBianca police investigator that, "If I'm looking for a motive, I'd look for something which doesn't fit your habitual standard with which you use to work as police - something much more far out." [46]

That so many rumors, both fantastic and plausible, exist in such a high profile case as the Manson murders is to be expected. My only interest in the rumors below stems primarily from the fact that it tends to show that early investigators - including prosecutor Vincent Bugliosi's factual information in *Helter Skelter* - may have purposely omitted or downplayed facts about the case that put either the witnesses or the victims in too bad of a light.

By engaging in this discussion, in no way am I trying to imply that because of certain lifestyle choices, the victims brought anything upon themselves. Nor do I claim that any of the more fantastic rumors discussed are true, particularly where no evidence beyond mere conjecture is presented. Rather, I am simply providing this information because it offers much interesting fodder for speculation and/or shows where early investigators may possibly have attempted to "soft peddle" other motives in order to protect certain people from publicity.

Below, I offer some of the more interesting rumors and innuendos that have always hovered in the background of the Manson case, as well as brief discussions of alternate theories concerning motives for the murders.

The Alleged Steven Parent/William Garretson Gay Liaison

Since the day that the news of the Tate murders broke, there has always been considerable controversy surrounding William Garretson, the only person present at the scene of the bloody Tate murders to survive.

Originally arrested by police as a suspect the same day that the murders were discovered, 19 year-old Garretson was later released after police questioning and having passed a polygraph test.

To refresh memories, Garretson is the person that Tate murder victim Steve Parent had come to visit that night at the Tate residence, ostensibly, to try to interest Garretson in the purchase of a clock radio. Later, as Parent was attempting to leave in his car, he was confronted by Charles "Tex" Watson, who shot and stabbed him to death, making him the first of the five Tate victims to die that night. (The police found his body still slumped behind the wheel of his car).

Garretson told police that he had met Parent while hitchhiking. Parent had picked him up and given him a ride to the Tate residence several weeks prior to the murders. Recounting his activities on the night of the murders to the police, Garretson said that Parent had showed up unannounced at his place that night, supposedly in an attempt to interest Garretson in purchasing a clock radio. (Garretson estimated the time of Parent's arrival at around 11:45 that evening and recalled that he stayed only half an hour, drinking a beer he had been given, and making a phone call. The time on the same clock radio found in Parent's car had stopped at 12:15 a.m.; a fact which the prosecution later speculated was due to Parent having set the time while demonstrating how the clock worked for Garretson). [47]

At least that has always been the "official" story. However, independent researchers looking deeper into the Parent/Garretson relationship have revealed new information that has led many to suspect that Steve Parent was not simply visiting Garretson at the Tate residence that night in order just to sell a clock radio, but rather for a homosexual liaison.

In the book *Helter Skelter*, one is given the impression that Parent was essentially your average, clean-cut high school kid and that his presence at the Tate residence that night was under the most

innocent of circumstances. But upon closer scrutiny, a much different image emerges. It was later determined by other researchers that Parent had been arrested in the past for petty theft and as a result, served time in a youth correctional facility and was placed on probation afterward. From the original crime investigation of the Tate murders we learn this about Parent:

> "Steven Earl Parent, male Caucasian, 18 years, 6-0, 175, red hair, brown eyes. He lived with his parents at 11214 East Bryant Road, El Monte. His main occupation was that of a delivery boy for Valley City Plumbing Supply Company in Rosemead, California. He also worked part time at night for Jonas Miller Stereo, 8719 Wilshire Boulevard. On Friday morning, 8-8-69, he told his mother to have a clean change of clothes for him when he came home for lunch from his job at the plumbing supply company. He told her he was going to work at his second job and didn't want to come home after work before going to Hollywood for his second job. Parent has an arrest record as a juvenile for burglary. The chief object of attack during the five burglaries he was caught at was electronic equipment. He served two years in the California Youth Authority program. *He was described as having both sadistic and homosexual tendencies by a probation officer*." (Italics supplied). [48]

Garretson was a houseboy/groundskeeper/caretaker at the Tate residence who, at the time that the murders occurred, was living in the guesthouse located at the back of the property. Garretson had been hired by Rudi Altobelli, the owner of the property at 10050 Cielo Drive, to look after the guesthouse and to take care of Altobelli's three dogs. (Altobelli was also gay - flamboyantly so, according to some - so it would not be at all unusual for him to have hired a gay or bisexual houseboy).

During his August 10, 1969 polygraph examination, Garretson was asked if he was gay or if he had ever had sex with any of the Tate victims, which he denied. However, he did admit to having engaged in gay sex in the past. (Garretson may have actually been bisexual). From the transcript of the polygraph interview:

Q: Are you gay?
A: No.
Q: Huh?
A: No.
Q: Ever had sex with Steve?
A: No.
Q: Ever have sex with a man?

A: Yes.
Q: Who?
A: Well, when I first came out here, you know, I was in the big city and everything, and, well, some guy named Rice or something like that - I don't know if I did or not. I was asleep when it happened, but the kid that I came out here with said that, you know, he did whatever he did.
Q: What was he supposed to have done?
A: Well, what they usually do.
Q: Well, they do a lot of things.
A: Well, that was what he said.
Q: Screwed you in the butt?
A: No.
Q: Made you suck him?
A: No.
Q: He sucked you?
A: Yes.
Q: And he gave you a head job?
A: Yes, he said that. That's what he said.
Q: But you don't know this?
A: I, well, I don't know. He showed us a movie, and we rolled over and went to sleep, and there was a lot of people that crashed it and everything. I thought it was just a regular place where people slept. That was in Hollywood.
Q: He was supposed to have given you a head job?
A: Yes.
Q: And you're supposed to sleep through this?
A: Well, I was asleep. Well, I didn't know it until a couple of days later. That's what I heard.
Q: You think somebody could give you a head job and you'd sleep through it?
A: Probably.
Q: You think so?
A: Yes.
Q: I find it hard to believe.
A: Well, I was up for about two nights. That's when we first came out here.
Q: Okay, unless you are high on downers or something like this.
A: No, I wasn't on downers; that was when I first came out here. We hitchhiked all the way across from Ohio.
Q: Uh huh.
A: And I was up for a few nights and . . . (Page 39 missing, narrative continues on page 40)
A: . . . and I met this one kid - he was about 26 or 27, you know, and he said, well, asked where I was going, and I told him I was going to some movie. And he wanted, you know, he says, "Do you care if I come along?" and I says, "I don't care." You know, anyway delayed it, and I just, you know, I says, "Well, why don't you buy some beer, you know,

and play monopoly or something?" Play monopoly, and we did, and we played monopoly and stuff, but I never had sex with him or anything. But I figured he might be gay, but I don't know. Because, you know, how they get around - he asked me if I ever had sex with anybody, you know, men; and I told him no. I just told him maybe one time before.
Q: While you were at this residence where you are living now-
A: Yes. [49]

What does the revelation about a possible Parent/Garretson sexual tryst prove as far as the murders themselves are concerned? Absolutely nothing. But if it is true that Parent went to visit Garretson that night primarily for a quick sexual interlude, then it tends to show that the book *Helter Skelter* and others are *not* the definitive investigations into the Manson case that they purport to be. And in particular, that Bugliosi's portrayal of Steve Parent was inaccurate, i.e., that there was something more to the story than Parent simply being in the wrong place at the wrong time, as Bugliosi seems to want to imply, a scenario that really has never made proper sense. (As one researcher very succinctly pointed out on a Manson-related blog, "Steven Parent was *not* at the crime scene for reasons that make logical sense in the human experience. Just ask yourself when you last tried to sell a piece of electronics to an acquaintance at midnight?") [50]

Since day one, police investigators and other researchers have always felt that Garretson has not told everything that he knows about the case and that he was lying about what he had seen and heard that night. Garretson was at home (in the Tate residence guest house) during the entire time that the murders occurred, but originally claimed to police investigators that he neither saw nor heard anything because he had stayed inside and had been listening to a stereo at a loud volume.

Police who interrogated Garretson described his answers to their questions as "stuporous and non-responsive" and believed that he was under the influence or coming down from some drug. [51]

Garretson admitted during his polygraph exam that the night before the murders occurred, he had slept very little, staying up late drinking beer, smoking pot, and taking Dexedrine (speed), which made him sick the next day. That night, when the murders occurred, he claimed that he had again stayed awake all night, writing letters and listening to the stereo "until just before dawn." [52]

Garretson admitted to police that he had been "scared" that night because he noticed that the handle on the door had been turned down as if someone had tried to get inside. [53] (Manson girl Patricia Krenwinkel, one of the assassins sent to the Tate residence, would later state that she had approached the guesthouse and had tried the handle on the

door. One also has to wonder whether or not Garretson's "fear" might have been, in part, speed-induced paranoia).

Later Garretson would admit that he actually had both seen and heard “unusual” things the night of the murders. In a 1999 television interview, Garretson stated the following:

• That he probably *did* hear Steven Parent being shot:

> “It seemed like firecrackers. And I thought maybe it was, you know, his car backfiring. You know I had no idea. It didn't alarm me as much, I mean it just seemed, It made me angry because I thought he was throwing firecrackers out and I thought ‘If he comes back up here again I'm going to give him hell.’ And, you know, 'cause I thought he was going to be waking the people up next door or something.” [54]

• That he may have seen Manson killer Patricia Krenwinkel chasing murder victim Abigail Folger and heard her plea for her life while she was being stabbed to death:

> “I heard a scream. And the scream sounded like, you know, like somebody was getting ready to get thrown into the pool. And, you know, or something. I looked through the window and it seemed to me that there was a girl chasing a, uh, girl. I wondered ‘What's going on?’ And I didn't look anymore. You know, I don't wanna look like somebody looking at you know, looking out the window.
>
> I heard somebody saying, ‘Stop. Stop. I'm already dead.’ And it didn't make sense. How can somebody be saying, ‘Stop, you know, I'm already dead.’ How would they be talking if they were dead? It just doesn't make sense.” [55]

• Hearing someone (later determined to be Patricia Krenwinkel) trying the lock on the guesthouse door:

> “It seemed like the handle was moved. Like someone, you know, wanted to come in. It seemed like a few seconds. Just a few seconds and all of a sudden I heard, like, someone running [away from the guesthouse door] in the direction of the main house. You know, ‘What's going on?’ And, you know, no idea. You know, I

> just said, ‘Somebody's running away.’ You know, why would they be running away?” [56]

While it seems fairly certain that Garretson was not involved in the murders himself, what we have been led to believe about his doings that night, and specifically, what he heard and saw, can most definitely be called into question.

The Alleged Manson Sex Films

In the voice-over commentary to his film, *Manson Family Movies*, director/producer John Aes-Nihil mentions that he once interviewed Paul Krassner [57], who claims to have seen a film shot at the Tate residence that allegedly showed Abigail Folger, Voytek Frykowski, Charles Manson and Susan Atkins engaging in group sex while high on MDA. [58]

Concerning this same incident, Paul Krassner, writing for a 1999 edition of *Scope* magazine, stated:

> “I'd always felt that Manson and his killers had some connection with their victims before the murders took place.
>
> When Hal Lipset, the renowned private investigator, informed me a few years ago that the Los Angeles Police Department seized pornographic films and videotapes found in Polanski's loft and, additionally, certain LAPD officers were selling the tapes, that seemed like a clue. One police source told Lipset that there was seven hours worth of Polanski's homemade porn, and that it was worth a quarter of a million dollars.
>
> Lipset gave me a litany of those private porn flicks. There was Greg Bautzer, an attorney for Howard Hughes, with Jane Wyman, the ex-wife of then-California Governor Ronald Reagan. There was Cass Elliot in an orgy with Yul Brynner, Peter Sellers, and Warren Beatty. This trio, along with John Phillips, had offered a $25,000 reward for the capture of the killers. There was Sharon Tate with Dean Martin. There was Sharon with Steve McQueen. And there she was with two black bisexual men.
>
> ‘The cops weren't too happy about that one,’ Lipset recalled.

> I eventually tracked down a reporter who told me that when she was hanging around with the LAPD, they showed her a porn video of Susan Atkins, one of Charlie's devils, with Voytek Frykowski, one of the victims. This contradicts the official story, which is that the executioners and the victims had never met until the night of the massacre.
>
> But apparently the reporter mentioned the wrong victim, because when I wrote to Charlie and asked directly, "Did Susan sleep with Frykowski?" he answered, "You are ill advised and misled. Sebring [one of the victims] done Susan's hair and I think he sucked one or two of her dicks. I'm not sure who she was walking out from her stars and cages, that girl loves dick, you know what I mean, hon. Yul Brynner, Peter Sellers." [59]

A similar rumor that is often bandied about on various Internet message boards portrays Voytek Frykowski as an active playboy with a penchant for picking up young hippie girls on the Sunset Strip in Los Angeles and then taking them home to the Tate residence for drugs and sex. As such, it has been alleged that Manson family member (and later prosecution witness) Linda Kasabian was one of those females picked up by Frykowski and that she was videotaped doing drugs and engaging in sex with him at the Tate residence. Yet another rumor concerning the same Frykowski/Kasabian sexual liaison has Kasabian being forcibly raped by Frykowski. (This alleged rape is often noted as a motive for revenge on the part of the Manson family).

The Alleged Drug Deal Burn Motive for the Murders

According to the first Tate homicide report issued by the investigators, Jay Sebring, Voytek Frykowski and Abigail Folger were “confirmed narcotics users on a daily basis” who “habitually associated” with “confirmed narcotics users and peddlers,” a fact that was played down by a great many other mainstream researchers on the subject, but which tends to support the “drug burn” theory as a motive for the murders. [60]

The police found plenty of illegal drugs at the Tate residence. At the murder trial, Sergeant Michael McGann of the Los Angeles Police Department testified that marijuana, hash, cocaine and MDA were all found on the premises. [61]

In fact, Voytek Frykowski was high on MDA when the murders took place. And there is a persistent rumor that Frykowski was dealing MDA and had ripped people off in the past. It is also been alleged that Frykowski had burned either Manson or some of Manson's followers for a large sum of money in a past deal for the drug.

The rumored scenario has Manson himself or some of his followers involved in a drug deal with Frykowski and his associates for MDA and that they ripped him off, either by delivering bad drugs or simply by not coming through with the promised goods and keeping the money. Subsequently, Manson is said to have sought revenge for being burned by them.

It is known that Manson was involved in a lot that his followers knew nothing about and it is certainly within the realm of possibility that he might have used them as a "hit squad" over the bad drug deal, while leading them to believe that they were actually killing in order to ignite Helter Skelter and for "love of brother," i.e., to free Bobby Beausoleil from jail. (Another possibility is that there was a three-fold motive for the murders: 1) revenge for the bad drug deal; 2) to free Bobby from jail by committing copycat murders similar to the Hinman slaying; and 3) to ignite Helter Skelter - which I am still convinced was something that Manson actually believed in).

During the penalty phase of the Manson trial, Susan Atkins testified that Linda Kasabian "told me to get a knife and a change of clothes . . . she said these people in Beverly Hills had burned her for $1,000 for some new drug, MDA." (But in the interest of real objectivity, any such utterance that issued from the mouth of Susan Atkins must be viewed with a great deal of skepticism). [62]

But if one continues to follow along that line, it is possible that the "people in Beverly Hills" may have been Harris Pickens "Pic" Dawson and Billy Doyle, two Canadian drug dealers that Voytek Frykowski and Jay Sebring were alleged to have been involved in drug deals with. Dawson dealt in both cocaine and MDA. Dawson at one time dated "Mama" Cass Elliot, who was also acquainted with Manson, as he and his followers were frequent visitors to Elliot's house. Cass Elliot was questioned thoroughly by police about her relationship with Dawson and Doyle, both who were initial suspects in the case. In the same conspiratorial vein, it is worth noting that Voytek Frykowski knew Cass Elliot, too. [63]

In post-arrest interviews from prison, Manson has been quoted as saying that if the true story about the murders were ever known, there would be a scandal the likes of which Hollywood had never seen, hinting that what he was talking about involved "kiddie porn" (child pornography)

and large-scale drug dealing by the Hollywood elite. (Many researchers into this case believe that the drugs and porn theory explains why prosecutor Bugliosi went with the more fantastic Helter Skelter motive to convict Manson because the real story involved way too many high-profile celebrities). Manson has also alluded to an $11,000 drug burn the he said implicated a “millionaire friend” of his.

All of the foregoing is certainly no smoking gun. But when the known drug use of the victims and the celebrities connected to the case is taken into account, along with Roman Polanski’s later conviction for the statutory rape of a 13 year-old child, it becomes considerably less easy to dismiss out of hand what other researchers and Manson himself hints at.

Bodies Buried at Barker

In March of 2008, the press began reporting about a new search for possible Manson family murder victims long rumored to have been buried in the desert near Manson’s old hideout at Barker Ranch in California’s Death Valley.

Barker Ranch was the Manson family’s last known residence and the place that they fled to immediately following the Tate-LaBianca murders. It is located in Death Valley National Park, one of the most desolate places on the face of the earth.

The theory of unknown murder victims at Barker Ranch stems from several sources, most notably, from a 1969 statement attributed to Manson family member Susan Atkins. Atkins, a notorious braggart, allegedly told a fellow inmate she was incarcerated with that not only was the Family responsible for killing Sharon Tate, but that they had also killed other people, saying “there’s also three people out in the desert that they done in," supposedly referring to other possible victims of the Family during their spree of killings in the summer of 1969. [64]

Additionally, Manson prosecutor Vincent Bugliosi claims in his book *Helter Skelter* that one (unnamed) source with close ties to the Manson family stated that he overheard how “there are supposed to be two boys and a girl buried about eight feet deep behind Barker Ranch.” [65]

It has also been theorized that the bodies may possibly be those of unknown drifters, hitchhikers, or some of the many young runaways who came into contact with the Family, only to end up being murdered and then buried in the vast, featureless desert behind Barker Ranch.

One much bandied about scenario has a witness claiming to have seen Charles Manson and Manson follower/head hit-man Charles

“Tex” Watson leave the ranch house at Barker to walk a young girl who had become disillusioned with the Family up through a desert pass. Supposedly, Manson and Watson came back an hour later without her and she was never seen again. If this eyewitness account is true, you either have a story of two men who were gallant enough to see a young girl on her way (implausible, knowing Manson’s general attitude about women), or an evil scenario for a brutal murder.

What would make the latter possibility seem the most likely (again, presuming that the rumor is true) is the fact that Barker Ranch lies well within Death Valley, many miles from the main highway and over some of the roughest road one can image. It is hard to picture a young girl leaving on her own to walk all the way back to civilization under such daunting conditions. Unless, perhaps, she knew something she was not supposed to know and/or she feared for her life.

Tex Watson described the road conditions leading up to Barker Ranch like this:

> “Charlie was especially attracted to two isolated ranches at the top of Golar Wash - Myers and Barker. The Wash, even by day, without LSD and a knife in your ribs, was hellish, unbelievably rugged. It could take a good half a day to work your way up on foot, and even the toughest jeep would have a hard time against the boulders and narrow turns.” [66]

Intrigued by the rumors, Sergeant Paul Dostie of the Mammoth Lakes Police department traveled to the Barker Ranch multiple times over the years during his off-duty hours. He would eventually lead an unofficial and informal team of forensic investigators to Barker Ranch where they used specially-trained cadaver dogs and other equipment in an attempt to locate these possible victims.

Along for the trip and acting as a guide was prospector Emmett Harder, a local miner with a claim in the area, who was also a veteran of many meetings and run-ins with the Manson family back in the day.

Harder was interviewed by the press about the search and related the tale of yet another incident that is often cited in order to give credence to the "bodies buried at Barker" rumor: In October of 1969, two teenager runaways, Stephanie Schram (a favored girlfriend of Manson's) and Kathryn "Kitty" Lutesinger (girlfriend of Bobby Beausoleil, the Manson follower who murdered Gary Hinman) fled in fear from the Barker Ranch during the night. These two were so terrified of the Manson clan that they made the trip in the dark, through the rugged mountain and desert terrain, all the way back to the main highway in their bare feet.

Once there, they flagged down a California Highway Patrol vehicle. Placed in custody as runaways, they began to tell the police that Manson had threatened to kill them and also divulged details about the Hinman slaying and other murders. Acting on their story, the police traveled up the wash toward Barker. There, they arrested Manson family members Steve Grogan (a.k.a. Clem Tufts, the murderer of Donald "Shorty" Shea) and Hugh Rocky Todd and confiscated a shotgun the men were carrying. It has been alleged that Grogan and Todd were actually stalking Schram and Lutesinger with the intent to kill them as the two girls fled from Barker Ranch. The implication of this tale is, if these two barely managed to escape with their lives, how many more may not have been so lucky? [67]

According to press reports, Sergeant Dostie's search team located three to five areas of interest at Barker Ranch. In May of 2008, over a three day period, a team of scientists and crime scene investigators conducted a detailed excavation of the suspected sites at Barker. Nothing of any interest was recovered. [68]

St. Louis Globe-Democrat
5 Found Butchered In Beverly Hills Mansion
Midnight
Hushed Up By Authorities:
NAMES OF 9 HOLLYWOOD STARS MARKED FOR DEATH BY SHARON TATE'S MURDERERS
Hollywood's Most Controversial Newspaper is Back - By Demand
HOLLYWOOD STAR
Adults Only 75¢
MANSON NAMES CELEB FRIENDS IN SEX CULT
TATE'S (NEVER-BEFORE-PUBLISHED)
FELIPE ROSE NUDE!
NATIONAL EXAMINER
25¢
EXCLUSIVE!
CHARLES MANSON'S STRANGE SEX SECRETS
Why They Willingly Gave Th
Bodies For His Pervert
CONFIDENTIAL FLASH
FAMOUS DIVORCEE CLAIMS: "36,000 ALIMONY A "PITTANCE"
NOW, TOLD FOR THE FIRST TIME!
HOW CHARLES MANSON PROGRAMMED TATE MURDERS
The National CLOSE-UP
25¢
Manson Trial Defendant Brags
I DRANK SHARON TATE'S BLOOD
MANSON GIRLS' INCREDIBLE CONFESSIONS:
"I STABBED SHARON TATE AGAIN AND AGAIN..."
the Exploiter
TEEN
More Manson Cult Rituals:
ORGIES IN THE DESERT
SECRETS OF CHARLES MANSON'S SATAN CULT

An Interesting Comparison Between Jesus Christ and Charles Manson

Below is a comparison between the original Christian sect that adhered to a belief in Jesus Christ as the new Messiah, and that of Charles Manson and his followers, who believed that Manson was actually the Second Coming of Christ.

• Both Manson and Jesus' followers believed they were the prophesied "Son of God" and worshipped them accordingly.

• Both had their twelve apostles (Manson, several times over).

• Both were ultimately betrayed by one of these followers (Jesus by Judas and Manson by both Susan Atkins and Linda Kasabian).

• Both had devoted female disciples and close confidantes named Mary (Jesus had Mary Magdalene and Manson had Mary Brunner).

• Both lived in the desert and had tribulations of importance while there.

• Both Manson's and Jesus' followers believed that they had "magical" powers.

• Both were arrested, denounced for their "revolutionary" beliefs, and placed on trial.

• Both were found guilty at a criminal trial and sentenced to death. [69]

HEALTER
SKELTER

Revelation 9

According to the most popular theory, Manson truly believed that there were hidden messages in the Beatles songs foretelling of a coming Armageddon; that he also believed that the Beatles were actually divine messengers sent by God to reveal the secrets of this impending world destruction; and finally, that in order to kick start this Apocalypse, the Beatles were actively seeking to find Manson, as Jesus Christ reincarnated, to act as the final spark that would set everything into violent motion.

Reprinted below is the full text of *Revelation 9*, part of the chapter found in the Christian Bible on which Manson based his Helter Skelter, “End of the World,“ Apocalyptic beliefs, in conjunction with the messages he heard from listening to the Beatles song, *Revolution 9*.

---

1. And the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star fall from heaven unto the earth: and to him was given the key of the bottomless pit.

2. And he opened the bottomless pit; and there arose a smoke out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit.

3. And there came out of the smoke locusts upon the earth: and unto them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power.

4. And it was commanded them that they should not hurt the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, neither any tree; but only those men which have not the seal of God in their foreheads.

5. And to them it was given that they should not kill them, but that they should be tormented five months: and their torment was as the torment of a scorpion, when he striketh a man.

6. And in those days shall men seek death, and shall not find it; and shall desire to die, and death shall flee from them.

7. And the shapes of the locusts were like unto horses prepared unto battle; and on their heads were as it were crowns like gold, and their faces were as the faces of men.

8. And they had hair as the hair of women, and their teeth were as the teeth of lions.

9. And they had breastplates, as it were breastplates of iron; and the sound of their wings was as the sound of chariots of many horses running to battle.

10. And they had tails like unto scorpions, and there were stings in their tails: and their power was to hurt men five months.

11. And they had a king over them, which is the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in the Hebrew tongue is *Abaddon*, but in the Greek tongue hath his name *Apollyon* (in Latin, *Exterminans*).

12. One woe is past; and, behold, there come two woes more hereafter.

13. And the sixth angel sounded, and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God;

14. Saying to the sixth angel which had the trumpet, loose the four angels which are bound in the great river Euphrates.

15. And the four angels were loosed, which were prepared for an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year, for to slay the third part of men.

16. And the number of the army of the horsemen were two hundred thousand thousand: and I heard the number of them.

17. And thus I saw the horses in the vision, and them that sat on them, having breastplates of fire, and of jacinth, and brimstone: and the heads of the horses were as the heads of lions; and out of their mouths issued fire and smoke and brimstone.

18. By these three was the third part of men killed, by the fire, and by the smoke, and by the brimstone, which issued out of their mouths.

19. For their power is in their mouth, and in their tails: for their tails were like unto serpents, and had heads, and with them they do hurt.

20. And the rest of the men which were not killed by these plagues yet repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not worship devils, and idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and of wood: which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk:

21. Neither repented they of their murders, nor of their sorceries, nor of their fornication, nor of their thefts.

The Summer of Love Breeds a Season of Hate:
The Effects of the Manson Murders on
Public Perceptions of the Hippie Lifestyle

"You play the game of money. As long as you can sell a newspaper, some sensationalism, and you can laugh at someone and joke at someone and look down at someone, you know. You just sell those newspapers for public opinion, just like you are all hung on public opinion, and none of you have any idea what you are doing. You are just doing what you are doing for the money, for a little bit of attention from someone."

Statement made by Charles Manson,
while testifying at the Tate-LaBianca murder trial

"This will be remembered as the first of the acid murders . . . we're on the brink of a whole new concept of violence . . . perpetrated against society by people who have reached a different plateau of reality through LSD."

Statement made by Manson family attorney Paul Fitzgerald, while discussing the Tate-LaBianca murders with the press

"Acid is groovy, kill the pigs."

Words allegedly chanted by hippie thrill killers during the 1970 bludgeoning and stabbing murders of the Jeffrey MacDonald family

In much the same way as the "Satanic panic" hit in the 1980's, a wave of "hippie cult hysteria" flourished in the wake of the 1969 Manson murders. Subsequently, public perceptions of the hippies as a non-violent, peace-loving subculture began to shift dramatically.

Many hippies who were involved in the original "counterculture" during that time period had stories to tell about negative fallout from a public who had begun to associate the hippie lifestyle with a series of horrifyingly violent, drug-induced crimes that occurred across America toward the end of the 1960's. As a result, the Manson murders, being only the first to be so publicized, later became linked to a greater cultural fear aided by numerous shocking and widely reported similar crimes. (Along with the Manson case, there were many other grisly and highly publicized murders and other crimes that had either been committed by or linked in the public mind to "hippie" elements or to so-called "drug crazed cultists" living in communal settings).

These events, played for full sensational effect in the media, would occur within such short time frames from each other that for awhile, the public was literally bombarded with a shocking portrait of the

hippie community, one that shifted from the old view of hippies as the epitome of passive gentleness into a new, frighteningly savage image.

The fallout was swift and all-encompassing. And in much the same vein, this media-constructed image of the drug-crazed, murderous hippie was no different than the way veterans returning from the Vietnam War would also be stereotyped in the mid-1970's, both by the press and Hollywood. That exploitation included fostering the image of Vietnam vets as war-traumatized, unstable individuals, likely to snap and go on a violent rampage at any given moment. (I can recall only too well how many television programs and B-movies of that era exploited not only the image of Vietnam vets, but also by catering to public fears about such things as roving bands of "psychopathic" biker gangs, angry black power "militants" with guns, and of course, exploitation films about sex-crazed, blood-thirsty hippies living in spaced-out drug communes).

In the book *Helter Skelter*, prosecutor Vincent Bugliosi tells of this backlash against hippie-types in the aftermath of the Manson case where sensational press coverage laid the murders out in all their gory detail. Bugliosi writes:

> If the press and TV reports were correct, a majority of young people whom the media had lumped together under the label "hippies" disavowed Manson. Many stated that the things he espoused , such as violence, were directly contrary to their beliefs. And more than a few were bitter about the guilt by association. It was almost impossible to hitchhike anymore; one youth told a *New York Times* reporter, "If you're young, have a beard, or even long hair, motorists look at you as if you're a 'kill-crazy cultist' and jam the gas." [70]

Immediately after the story of Susan Atkins' confession to the bloody Tate-LaBianca murders was splashed across the front page of the *Los Angeles Times*, the public perceptions of the flower children began to change. Author Jess Bravin wrote:

> The reaction came down hard on hippies. On page one, the *San Francisco Chronicle* summed it up in a story from Topanga, a place the Family loved: Manson Arrest Reaction: 'The War On The Longhairs.' 'A housewife sees a long-haired hitchhiker, hesitates, and drives by,' the story began. 'A bearded man walks into a store and the clerk asks, half in jest, 'Did you have anything to do with the murders.' *Esquire* later devoted an entire issue to what it called the 'New Evil,' sending writer Gay Talese to the Spahn Ranch and filling out the magazine with

> articles on witches in Hollywood, Satanic-themed artwork, and musings on the future of California's latest trend. And *Life*, describing what it called Manson's 'blithe and gory crimes,' reported that the prime suspect had 'attuned his concepts of villainy to the childish yearnings of these hippie converts, to their weaknesses and catchwords, their fragmentary sense of religion and enchantment with drugs and idleness, and immersed them in his own ego and idiotic visions of the Apocalypse.' [71]

The use of LSD, a drug that was firmly rooted in the public consciousness as being one of the prime motivating forces behind the hippie movement, had never been viewed as anything but dangerous. But following the Manson murders, LSD developed an even more ominous association. Bravin recounts the following comment from Manson family attorney Paul Fitzgerald:

> "This will be remembered as the first of the acid murders. [W]e're on the brink of a whole new concept of violence [p]erpetrated against society by people who have reached a different plateau of reality through LSD." [72]

However, one of the many ironies of the Manson trial was that the prosecution was put into the position of actually having to *defend* LSD use in order to combat defense assertions that LSD made people crazy and/or could turn ordinary people into killers. (The defense hoped to be able to show that the Manson defendants' use of LSD had affected their minds and as such, they were not responsible for their actions). The prosecution was forced to call expert witnesses who testified that people under the influence of LSD were not normally violent. [73]

The Manson trial lasted for ten months and was a virtual media feeding frenzy almost from day one. That the press focused on the fact that the Manson family was comprised of mostly young hippie flower children who had turned to bloody murder fed the public's general fear of drugged-out hippie "thrill killers" high on LSD. (As noted in the next chapter of this book, Susan Atkins would later claim that the Manson murders had been committed in order to "instill fear into the establishment." It can now be argued that their strategy actually succeeded quite well).

The December 12, 1969 issue of *Life Magazine* (titled "The Love and Terror Cult" and including the sub-headings, "The man who was their leader; the charge of multiple murder; the dark edge of hippie life") featured a full front cover photo of what was to become the most widely

distributed photograph of Manson and his "hypnotic stare." At the time, *Life Magazine* had a huge distribution, a fact that ensured that the fear Manson inspired could gain entry into virtually every home in America.[74]

Hippies on their way to the Woodstock music festival in August of 1969 recalled passing newsstands with blaring headlines about the bloody Tate murders that had occurred only days before. Later, when the killers were caught and identified as young hippies, the Woodstock generation faced a more hostile than usual public whose fear had been stoked by lurid stories of violence committed by wild-eyed, drugged-out longhairs. Karlene Faith, author of a book about former Manson follower Leslie Van Houten, would write how:

> [T]he Manson murders dominated the California media for over a year. When the accused were found to have come out of a hippie commune, the attention intensified. The media latched on to people's worst fears about hippies and the antiwar movement. By the end of the trial, Manson's murders were touted as a singular milestone in the annals of homicide.[75]

Author Katherine Ramsland, commenting about a series of "hippie murders" that occurred during the 1969-1970 time period, noted how:

> There was already plenty of tension between ordinary people making a living and those who had "dropped out" to get high and find a more communal type of life by rebelling against established traditions. Each group eyed the other with suspicion. Now, people believed, some of those hippies were showing their stripes, their peace-loving slogans notwithstanding.[76]

On December 6, 1969, a mere four months after the Manson murders, four people lost their lives at the Rolling Stones free concert held at the Altamont Speedway near San Francisco. Two of those people died after they were run over and crushed by vehicles while asleep in their sleeping bags and another person drowned; most shockingly of all, Meredith Hunter, an eighteen year old black man, was brutally beaten and stabbed to death by a group of Hell's Angels.

The Hell's Angels, hired by the Rolling Stones to act as concert security in exchange for $500 worth of beer, had also allegedly been given access to multiple tabs of orange sunshine LSD. (As noted in Chapter 12 of my book, *Labyrinth13*, many of the Altamont concert attendants said later that this orange sunshine LSD seemed to be "contaminated" and produced a very negative vibe of violence and death.

However, I have since learned that the LSD distributed at the concert likely just contained a much higher dose than normal and that this is what caused stronger reactions).

Medical reports from the show indicate that Altamont was dominated by numerous incidents of violence. Chief among these were altercations between concert goers and the Hell's Angels that occurred throughout the day. (Marty Balin, Jefferson Airplane's lead singer, was knocked unconscious by a Hell's Angel during a scuffle near the stage. Balin had tried to intervene while the Angels were beating a man with pool sticks. When band mate Paul Kantner told the audience what had happened, another Hell's Angel grabbed the microphone and began threatening *him*).

Almost immediately after the Rolling Stones took the stage, another fight broke out, perhaps due to some sort of strange energy, as the band began playing their first song "Sympathy for the Devil." (The band halted the song when they became aware that some sort of violence was happening and Mick Jagger could be heard saying into the microphone, "Something very funny always happens when we start that number." It was near the end of the band's second song that the murder occurred).

In the aftermath, the view held by many was that while the word "Woodstock" stood for all that was positive and good about the hippie subculture, "Altamont" was seen as all that could go wrong. In a very real sense, the event spelled the death knell for the innocence of "flower power," and for many people, Altamont was seen as a sort of "apocalyptic" ending to all of the 60's peace and love vibrations.

As noted, the Manson case was not the only blow to the image of hippies as a peace-loving community as other murders, often dubbed by the press as "hippie cult murders," took place very close to the same time period:

On February 17, 1970 in North Carolina, just six months after the Manson murders, Army officer Jeffrey MacDonald claimed to have been attacked in his home at the Fort Bragg military base by a group of four hippies who were high on LSD. MacDonald would later tell investigators that after being awakened by his wife's screams to find intruders in his house, he was stabbed and knocked unconscious and that three male members of a hippie cult then viscously murdered his pregnant wife and two young daughters. All of this allegedly occurred while a lone female hippie with long blond hair and carrying a lighted candle, stood by chanting, "Acid is groovy, kill the pigs." (The case had many striking parallels to the Manson murders, including alleged "crazed hippie" perpetrators; the savage amount of "overkill" inflicted on the victims; the

writing of the word “pig” on the walls of the MacDonald home in the victim’s own blood; and the fact that Colette MacDonald, like Manson murder victim Sharon Tate, was pregnant at the time she was murdered). Although years later MacDonald would be tried and convicted for the murders himself, in the mind of the public, these crimes remained linked to “drug-crazed hippie cult killers.”[77]

On July 13, 1970, a hippie hitchhiker named Stanley Dean Baker was arrested in California for the murder of a Montana man who had stopped to give him a ride. According to police, Baker admitted that he had shot the man to death and then cannibalized the body. (In fact, Baker admitted to cutting out and eating the victim’s heart and also had bones from the man’s fingers in his pocket when apprehended). Baker was branded a “hippie Satanist” by the popular press because he had both a recipe for LSD and a copy of *The Satanic Bible* in his possession when he was arrested. While Baker would later tell both law enforcement officials and fellow inmates that he had participated in a “blood drinking cult” in Wyoming, he later confessed that his crimes were actually the result of his drug use and had nothing to do with any involvement with Satanism.[78]

Three months later, on October 19, 1970, firemen in Santa Cruz, California, responding to a fire at an upscale home in the Soquel area of the city, found five bodies floating in the home’s swimming pool, all dead from gunshot wounds to the back of the head. The victims included Dr. Victor Ohta, his wife and two sons, and Dr. Ohta’s secretary.

A note left by the killer on Dr. Ohta’s car threatened death to any “persons who misuses the natural environment or destroys same” by the “People of the Free Universe.” The note ended with a reference to the four knight cards of the tarot deck.

Within days, police investigators began targeting suspects in the Santa Cruz hippie community and a major rift between the hippies and police developed. In a newspaper article, a relative of one of the victims suggested that the murders could only have been committed by a “Manson-type cult.” Soon after that statement, a local hippie hangout received several bomb threats. A reporter for the *Santa Cruz Sentinel* wrote that:

> The Soquel massacre, steeped in mysticism and stamped with a clear warning that other similar attacks might follow, has chilled the marrow of the established community . . . hippie-types, for their part, fear indiscriminate vigilante retaliation against innocent members of their culture.[79]

What may not be as well known is the fact that members of the local hippie community actually led the police to John Linley Frazier, a paranoid hippie loner who used LSD and mescaline and who was apparently obsessed with both ecology and aspects of the occult. Frazier had been kicked out of several Santa Cruz area hippie communes for his bizarre behavior and was living alone in a small cabin near the Ohta home at the time of the murders. (He was tried and convicted of the murders and given the death penalty, a sentence that was later commuted to life in prison after the death penalty was ruled unconstitutional).

Almost simultaneously (beginning on October 13, 1972, in Felton, California), hippie-type Herbert Williams Mullin committed the first of thirteen murders, carried out in the belief that in doing so, he would save California from a cataclysmic earthquake. Mullin was a paranoid schizophrenic who had been in and out of mental hospitals all of his life, but who would later be judged legally sane at his murder trial. His history of mental illness notwithstanding, Mullin was depicted in the press as just another burned-out hippie whose mind had been fried by drug use, as Mullin was a known LSD user. (One hippie later recalled that while in his presence, Mullin had ingested a whopping ten hits of LSD all at once). The District Attorney assigned to prosecuting the case was quoted as saying, “This is the result of people flipping out, and people taking drugs, and people doing their own thing.”

Mullin’s series of murders took place near Santa Cruz where many hippie communes flourished. The aftermath of the murders served to add more paranoia and mistrust towards hippies in the public mind, even though Mullin had actually killed several “hippie types” himself and would later claim to hate hippies.[80]

Other lesser known horror stories about so-called “LSD murders” also began to take their toll on the image of the hippie movement. Tales of alleged LSD-fueled violence were sensationalized in virtually every newspaper and television screen in America, both directly and indirectly blaming psychedelic drugs and the hippie lifestyle for violence: sponsors of a New York state bill to increase the penalties for possession of LSD cited one newspaper story as an example of the LSD-fueled hippie menace. In this story, it was reported that Stephen Kessler, a thirty-two year old Harvard graduate student and ex-mental patient who had committed a brutal murder, claimed to have been “flying on LSD for three days” and that he could not remember anything about the homicide. Law enforcement officers promptly labeled this case an “LSD murder.” (The newspaper headlines declared Kessler to be a “Mad LSD Slayer” and “LSD Killer”). At Kessler’s trial, psychiatrists testified that he actually suffered from chronic paranoid schizophrenia. He was found not guilty by reason of insanity with the issue of his use of LSD never being raised

or corrected in the public mind. (In fact, it was later disclosed that Kessler had not used LSD for a whole month prior to the murder).[81]

Several urban legends have been spawned that further illustrate the fear that the public has of the drug-crazed hippie killer, one of which is the tale of the "Hippie Babysitter." According to the *Snopes Urban Legend Reference Pages*, the basic story goes like this:

> A couple leaves their infant in the charge of a teenage, hippie-type girl while they go out on the town for the evening. When the mother phones home a few hours later to check up on things, the babysitter informs her that everything is fine and that she has put the turkey in the oven. A few moments later the couple recalls that they left no turkey at home; they rush home and find that the babysitter, high on LSD, has cooked their baby in the oven.[82]

Other urban legends depicting the alleged sinister motives of hippies and the dangers of LSD use include the tales of "Blue Star Acid," where paper rub-on "tattoos" featuring cartoon characters laced with LSD were supposedly being handed out to school children by evil hippie drug dealers; (the drug is allegedly absorbed through the skin simply by handling the paper or pressing it onto wet skin). And then there is the infamous tale of two hippie youths who, after ingesting LSD, stare at the sun until they go blind. (The latter story actually appeared as serious reporting in a several national newspapers).

From almost the beginning, Hollywood also got in on the action and produced a number of extremely lurid hippie exploitation films masquerading as cautionary public service announcements, but which were in fact aimed directly at feeding a morbid public appetite while pretending to take a moral stance. Often depicting drug-crazed hippies living and freaking out in "Manson family" style communes, such films as *The Hallucination Generation* (1967) and *Riot on Sunset Strip* (1967) depicted "hippie" youths running wild in an orgy of group sex, drugs, crime and even murder.

The Manson murders were also the subject of several ultra-low budget movies that were quickly churned out in the wake of the murders in order to cash in on the "killer hippie cult" hysteria. A short list of those films would include: *The Other Side of Madness* (also known as *The Helter Skelter Murders*), a sleazy 1970 film produced in record time, appearing almost immediately after the arrest of the Manson family. *The Helter Skelter Murders* was a blatant attempt to cash in on all the lurid publicity while claiming to depict the "true story" of the Manson murders. (The movie was shot on several authentic locations and features a

dramatization of Manson's "Helter Skelter" race war. Also includes one of Manson's own songs, "Mechanical Man" in the score); the 1971 film *Snuff* (later renamed *Slaughter*) in which a bearded and very creepy Manson-like cult leader uses hypnosis on young girls in order to orchestrate a series of murders; *I Drink Your Blood*, a 1971 film about a cult of homicidal, acid-dropping, devil-worshipping hippies whose Manson-esque leader utters the classic line, "Let it be known, sons and daughters, that Satan was an acid head." (From the press-book accompanying the release of *I Drink Your Blood*, we find the warning "Did you ever imagine what would happen if your community were invaded by hippies? You can now see what can happen to a town when hippies go wild!" This film has been humorously described by one reviewer as "the quintessential tale of a group of Satan-worshipping hippies who ingest meat pies contaminated by the blood of a rabid dog and go on a murder spree"). Finally, we have *The Love Thrill Murders* (1971), a soft-core porn film that features actor Troy Donahue as "Moon," a violence-obsessed, Manson-clone who is the leader of a murderous Jesus freak hippie cult in New York City's Greenwich Village. High marks for negative public influence would also have to go to both the 1972 documentary film *Manson* by Laurence Merrick and Robert Hendrickson and the 1976 made-for-television movie, *Helter Skelter*. While Merrick and Hendrickson's *Manson* was less exploitative than its fictional Hollywood counterpart, *Helter Skelter*, both managed to scare the hell out of the general public. (For a list of other notable hippie exploitation films and/or movies that contain themes directly inspired by the Manson murders, see the appendix section of this book, *List of Hippie Exploitation and Manson-Inspired Films*).

In addition to the film exploitation of the Manson murders, many magazine articles and books about the case followed quickly on the heels of the actual events and would also fuel the general public fear. Most notable of these was the true crime novel *Helter Skelter* (first published in 1974) in which the murders were not only graphically detailed, but also where prosecutor Vincent Bugliosi seldom missed a chance to strongly moralize against the hippie lifestyle in general, to a large extent, blaming the excesses of the counter culture for producing the likes of Charles Manson and his family. Bugliosi's book (and the two television miniseries it would later spawn) would not only exploit the hippie image, but would also commercialize the fear that the Manson murders and similar crimes had spread. But the truth be known, many of the more gruesome "facts" presented by Bugliosi -- much of it drawn from the confessions and testimony of the killers themselves -- would later prove to have been based on embellishments made by Manson family members who wanted to shock the general public as much as possible. (A few examples of this would include the supposed death list of Hollywood celebrities that members of the Manson family claimed they had plans to kill; the false assertion made by family member Steve

Grogan that he had cut murder victim Donald “Shorty” Shea into nine pieces or the highly suspect claim made by a prison informer that Susan Atkins said she had actually tasted Sharon Tate’s blood which later proved to be just another example of Atkins’ propensity for braggadocio). Author Karlene Faith noted that:

> After successfully prosecuting four of the accused, Los Angeles District Attorney Vincent Bugliosi wrote a mass-market novel-like book (*Helter Skelter*) about the murders. At the time, its cover made the promise, “No matter how much you think you know about the Manson case, this incredible book will shock you.” It was a best-seller, and is still in print today, replete with inaccuracies due to the defendants’ false testimony in court and their own propagation of sensationalized myths. One reviewer describes this book as “a morality play of the highest order, with the crusading prosecutor battling a demonic Manson on one hand and the bumbling of the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) on the other. One of Manson’s messages, like St. Augustine’s, was the he (and everyone) represented the perfect dialectic of God and Devil, life and death, good and evil, sacred and profane. The symbolism was perfectly geared to a Hollywood sensibility. Through the lenses of the prosecutor, a woefully tragic set of murders became mythic owing to their perversely formulaic entertainment value. Bugliosi went on to oversee the 1976 CBS-TV version of his story, and to make $2500 per speech (a large sum at the time) on the lecture circuit.[83]

In part, public hysteria about the hippie movement had as much to do with the explosion of huge numbers of hippie youth communes as did films and books with their garish tales about sex orgies and rampant drug use. Although communal living has a long history in other countries, such living arrangements were a relatively new phenomenon in America and in the mid to late 60’s, were to be found almost exclusively in the hippie subculture. During that time, the common public perception (again, due to media exploitation) was basically a belief that the hippie communes were all dens of rampant drug use, free love, and general immorality, but history shows a far more diverse picture than what the stereotype suggests. Many communes were founded on a religious basis or with an emphasis on spirituality and very disciplined lifestyles. Others were simply created in the search for a Utopian society.

In 1970, the Manson family’s own communal lifestyle was the subject of a detailed study conducted by Dr. David E. Smith, M.D. and Alan J. Rose of the Haight Asbury Free Clinic; members of the Manson

group often visited the clinic in order to receive medical treatment for sexually transmitted diseases.[84]

In this paper, the authors write that:

> [T]hrough the national media, the dominant culture in the United States has been made aware of a new style of commune which has evolved primarily in America's "hippie subculture." . . . These "hippie" communes can be categorized into six general types Crash Pad Type, Drug and Non-Drug Family Type, Drug and Non-Drug Marriage Type, and Self-Contained Rural Type . . . The common denominators in this type of commune are polygamous sexual practices involving all members of [the] group and cooperative child rearing. Following the preparation of this manuscript, the central figure in this report, Charles Manson, was arrested in connection with the Sharon Tate murders. However, it would be impudent to comment on the murders until Manson's trial has been completed. The "group marriage" is not new, of course, and has been practiced by various societies throughout history. Middle class white American youth participating in a group marriage is relatively new, however, particularly in that it represents a direct affront to the dominant culture's expressed moral code.

The authors also described Manson as "a "father figure" and "a 35-year-old white male with a past history of involvement with the law." They further noted that:

> Manson was thirty-five years of age, and had no college education. He was an extroverted, persuasive individual who served as absolute ruler of the group marriage commune. What he sanctioned was approved by the rest of the group, but what he disapproved was forbidden.[85]

The media made much out of the fact that a group of hippie youths and flower children, mostly comprised of young women, had allowed themselves to became involved with such a "Mephistophelean guru," as prosecutor Vincent Bugliosi was to later label Manson, and that those same followers so fiercely defended Manson after his arrest, a fact that seemed to call into question all that everyone knew about the counterculture. A full study of the psychology behind such thinking on both sides of the issue is beyond the scope of this article, but my point is that, in the public mind, the Manson case (and others similar to it) was and still is, touted by detractors of the hippie movement as the ultimate "I

told you so" moral to the story for those who had embraced the hippie lifestyle.

However, such a perception is not quite the knockout punch it may appear to be as many residents of the Haight during that time period will tell you that Manson was only one of hundreds of such anti-establishment, LSD and mysticism philosophizers who frequented that scene. Many of these self-styled gurus were a welcomed part of the landscape and for the greater part, never betrayed any of the sometimes naïve trust placed in them by idealistic young hippies, most who thirsted for the same intense spiritual awareness and truth experienced while under the influence of psychedelics. (My research has turned up no other example of hippie "street gurus" from that era whom exploited others in such a horrendous manner and the Manson case appears to be completely unique in that sense). The fact that Manson turned out to be a person who ultimately involved his followers in violence is the real tragedy. And it is important to note that Manson did not show up on that scene handing out tabs of acid and knives while preaching violence to young hippies; his philosophical rap pretty much matched that of other street gurus at the time and the descent into an Apocalyptic vision of death and war only came along much later on.

Many of the communes formed in the 60's were often lead by a charismatic leader, a fact that seemed to determine whether or not a particular commune would survive the tests of time. And you might be surprised to learn, as I eventually did, that quite a few communes from the 60's not only survived, but are still thriving today. And while many (perhaps most) of them did indeed eventually fall apart -- often due to the drug excesses of their members -- quite a few (numbering in the hundreds) were and still are highly successful, among them the Morningstar Ranch, The Hog Farm, the Twin Oaks Intentional Community, and one group known simply as "The Farm."

The Farm, one of the most successful of the hippie communes, was started in the rugged wilds of Summertown, Tennessee. Founded in 1971, The Farm went on to become the largest hippie commune in North America, peaking out at around 1500 people in 1980. (As of this writing, its current population stood at about 200 folks). This group pioneered many aspects of the vegetarian diet, techniques for modern midwifery and home birth, and were very active in working towards methods for alternative energy.

However, public perceptions about hippie communes during the 1960's (and even today) was that of groups of lazy, dirty hippies lying around smoking marijuana while collecting their welfare checks. When I was a teenager, I spent the summer of 1972 living on a small hippie

commune in the mountains of North Carolina and the rule of law there was that if you didn't work, you didn't eat. There were no welfare checks or Manson family-style "garbage runs" in that group, but there was plenty of hard work caring for a large vegetable garden (which naturally, included a substantial crop of marijuana) and splitting loads of firewood to sell. And members of the commune often pitched in to help other "non-hippie" farmers and neighbors when they were short-handed, eventually earning the sometimes-begrudging respect from those people.

But to be completely honest, not all communes lived up to such noble standards and there were actually quite a few groups that were little more than blights on the communities that they inhabited. Or worse yet, communes that were weird beyond belief. A perfect example of the latter case was part of the subject of an article written by R. Stuart for a 2002 *Multidisciplinary Association for Psychedelic Studies* newsletter. In an article titled *Entheogenic Sects and Psychedelic Religions*, Stuart discusses various psychedelic religions founded in the United States, including those that involved communal living arrangements and writes that:

> In the late 1960s near Los Angeles, a group had the LSD-inspired belief that all life had equal value. They became fruitarians who ate only fruit that had fallen to the ground. Later, LSD visions revealed that God existed on Earth incarnate in dogs, and that all of humanity's problems were caused by the mistreatment of "man's best friend." Members of the Dog Commune herded dogs, raided animal shelters to liberate their canine deities, and were among the first animal rights groups in the United States to try to stop exploitation of dogs in scientific experiments.[86]

One really needs no additional evidence that not all LSD-inspired visions are as profound as they may at first seem, especially if we assume that the "Dog Commune" was awed by the fact that "god" spelled backward is "dog" when reaching the spiritual conclusions that they did. And while the intentions of a hippie group such as the Dog Commune seems to have been mostly benign and benevolent enough, I can't help but try to imagine what it would have been like to be the up-tight, straight-laced, average-Joe citizens who were probably living next door to them.

Another controversial hippie group was the "Lyman Family" which operated a successful commune in Boston, Massachusetts known as the Fort Hill community. This group was led by folk musician Mel Lyman, who supposedly, in a Manson-like fashion, had declared himself to be God. (In his book *The Autobiography of a World Savior*, Lyman

claimed that he came from another planet and had been sent to Earth to restore humanity to its original balance).[87]

In 1971, the Lyman Family would come under attack by one of the counter culture's very own voices: the fledgling music magazine *Rolling Stone*, usually a staid bastion of support for all things relating to hippie culture. *Rolling Stone* printed a scathing and highly critical two-part cover story written by David Felton about the Lyman Family commune. In that article, Felton charged that Mel Lyman was a Charles Manson-like leader who controlled his followers though psychedelic drugs, mind control and fear. (It has been observed that LSD can make the person under its influence vulnerable to the influence of a second party. In Felton's story -- and later in a full-length book -- he used the expression "acid fascism" to describe how psychedelic users were often so open to suggestion that they could be exploited by unprincipled persons, the Charles Manson case being the most classic example of this).[88]

Another article about the Lyman Family that appeared in the *Boston Phoenix* newspaper also raised the specter of the Manson family, noting that:

> Despite the obvious material gains of the communards -- or perhaps because of them -- they came under increasing attack. Only a couple of years earlier, the nation had been horrified by the ritual murders committed on the West Coast by communal disciples of Charles Manson. By 1971, a grim skepticism about alternative lifestyles had permeated America. Critics of Fort Hill life began to suggest that Lyman was the Manson-like center of a dangerous personality cult.[89]

Members of the Lyman commune, like the Process Church before them, did little at the time to quash the sordid speculation: it was reported by several people that the group paid homage to Charles Manson by keeping a poster of him hung on the wall under which they placed a vase full of fresh flowers daily. And according to another source, Manson family member Lynnette "Squeaky" Fromme used to visit and occasionally stay with Lyman in a home he owned in Los Angeles and that Manson and Lyman corresponded with each other for a brief period. Jim Kweskin, a member of the Lyman family, who, upon learning that his group had been compared to Manson's, jokingly quipped that:

> "The Manson family preached peace and love and went around killing people. We don't preach peace and love."[90]

And while most of the charges leveled at the Lyman Family would eventually prove to have been just so much hype -- even *Rolling Stone* would later admit later that Felton's story had been mostly an exaggeration -- the negative association with the Manson family would continue to haunt them for many years.

As of 1997, the Lyman group was still together, having amassed quite a sizeable fortune through real estate holdings and a home remodeling business. (Mel Lyman died in 1978 under circumstances that still remain a mystery).[91]

Another hippie phenomenon that arose out of the counterculture and which would also suffer from associations to "drug crazed cultists" was the so-called "Jesus freak" movement of the late 1960's and early 1970's. (The Jesus freak phenomenon was a cultural happening that I was able to observe up close and personal as I watched several of my own relatives and siblings, former hippies all, get sucked into the whole "hippies turned-on to Jesus" movement. The Jesus freak trend was at the forefront of what would later blossom into yet another major cultural icon of fear, that being the phalanx of insidious "brainwashing religious cults" that flourished from their beginnings in the early 1970's all the way into present times. Many hippies and other idealistic young people seeking a new spirituality were lured into these groups, many of which were -- or later became -- genuinely dangerous).

Known originally as "The Jesus Movement" or "The Jesus People," Jesus freaks described themselves as a "counter-counter-cultural movement." Jesus freaks were primarily hippies who had become disenchanted with certain aspects of the hippie value system and who sought to combine the peace and love of the hippie movement with old-time Christian evangelism. (While the name "Jesus freak" was originally coined as a derogatory label by other hippies -- the term "freak" being a common hippie description of anyone obsessed with a certain type of mind trip -- the moniker was soon proudly adopted by the Jesus People themselves).[92]

Like a great many things related to the hippies, the roots of the Jesus freak movement had its genesis in San Francisco's Haight Ashbury district where in 1967 Christian evangelical missions such as "The Living Room" were opened in small storefronts in the hippie business districts. Many of these "psychedelic evangelical" groups served as temporary shelters for the multitude of young hippies who had come to San Francisco and other major cities to join in the flower power vibe, only to find themselves homeless and living on the streets.[93]

As noted, the Jesus freaks kept the same style, dress, and language of the hippies, but changed such hippie ideas as “free love” to “free love of God” and brotherly love of other people. (A famous Jesus freak motto was “One Way,” a term that sought to remove focus away from the individual, as the original hippie movement tended to focus on, and instead shifted one’s consciousness towards a love of Jesus).[94]

Additionally, the birth of so-called “Christian rock,” the combination of rock music and Christian gospel, was an original product of the Jesus freak movement. Major examples of this were those films and Broadway plays that featured Jesus freak soundtracks and themes, such as *Jesus Christ Superstar* and *Godspell*. (The music created within the Jesus freak movement has now morphed into what is the contemporary Christian music of today).[95]

Many hippies who became Jesus freaks had sought out the Jesus movement after experiencing either bad drug freak-outs or in some cases, because they were seeking the same sort of positive mystical and religious experience that they had encountered under the influence of psychedelic drugs, such as LSD. In many cases, what they sought was to substitute their personal drug experiences for “getting high on Jesus.” (It should be noted that while most of the Jesus freak groups chose to eschew the use of drugs, many did not and/or its members just continued to use drugs on the sly. Hippies who gravitated toward the Jesus freak movement also tended to remain somewhat anti-establishment to some degree).

The Jesus freak phenomenon began to receive major publicity in America beginning around 1970 with the press reporting such events as hippies being baptized in rivers or in the ocean, Jesus freaks acting as tuned-in counterculture street preachers, and the publishing of hippie Christian newsletters. (Those newsletters were laid out in the style of the counterculture’s own “underground” newspapers, complete with psychedelic graphics and language. The use of elements of psychedelia to attract hippie followers and converts became a popular tactic practiced by many of the so-called “cults” that sprang up in the late 60’s and early 70’s, most notably, by the Hare Krishnas and to a lesser extent, Sun Myung Moon’s Unification Church).[96]

But the Jesus freak movement was not without controversy. Many of these groups would later become identified with Manson-like beliefs about a coming Apocalyptic doomsday, with a few of these groups espousing concepts that even rivaled the Process’ belief in a “Final Judgment” and Manson’s “Helter Skelter” for out-and-out unadulterated weirdness.

One major strange influence on both the Jesus freak movement and fundamentalist Christianity was author Hal Lindsey's series of books about a coming Apocalypse and the rise of the Antichrist as prophesized in the Christian Bible. This series began with the 1970 book *The Late Great Planet Earth*, a tale that sought to meld "end of the world" Biblical prophecy with world political events current at the time the book was written.

Lindsey, a conservative Christian fundamentalist, published *The Late Great Planet Earth* at the height of the Cold War, warning that Biblical prophecy pointed toward an invasion of Israel by the former Soviet Union, an act that he believed would trigger the Battle of Armageddon in the form of World War III, the last war on the face of the earth.

The Late Great Planet Earth, written in a style that used common language and which read almost like an action novel, became the bestselling book of the decade, with over 15 million copies sold. It also launched an intense modern interest and belief among both Jesus freaks and fundamentalist Christians about a violent Apocalyptic end to the world, an event that Lindsey's book suggested was actually quite imminent. (In the book, Lindsey prophesizes that there will be a period of great tribulation with plagues, wars, and famines and that Jesus Christ will then appear for the promised "Rapture," lifting up to heaven all those who believe in him, leaving the rest of humanity to suffer through seven more years of tribulation under the rule of the Antichrist).[97]

Lindsey next published *Satan Is Alive and Well on Planet Earth*, a book that warned against "occult influences" present in the world. Lindsey (much like Ed Sanders before him) alleges that there were active Satanic hippie communes afoot practicing such things as the ritual sacrifice of animals where the blood was drained and mixed with LSD in a cauldron to be used as a drink during occult rituals that involved "sexual deviation, pagan ceremonies, and rites which defy imagination." Lindsey also hinted that the practices of these alleged Satanic hippie cults might have also crossed into the realm of human sacrifice by trotting out the cases of Stanley Dean Baker and the Manson Family. That book also strongly implied that the Antichrist might be living among us now and that the triggering of Armageddon (perhaps in the form of a thermonuclear war with the former Soviet Union) was only awaiting the right series of events to be set into motion.[98]

Lindsey found the basis for most of the information for his prophecies in the Christian Bible's book of *Matthew* and the book of *Revelation*. (And yes, if you are noticing the similarities between all of this and the philosophies espoused in both the Process Church's belief in a "Final Judgment" and the Manson family's assertion that Helter Skelter

was only awaiting the right spark to ignite a final, bloody war, you are definitely paying attention).

The subsequent formation of Jesus freak communes in some rural communities, many of them who embraced Apocalyptic beliefs similar to Hal Lindsey's, were not always as well received as one might imagine a group of young Christians might have been! The negative fallout from media images and stories of a bible-obsessed Manson family and a scripture-quoting "Satanist" Process Church had led to much public mistrust and fear. And that fear was in turn transferred straight to the Jesus freak communes by way of a generalized suspicion and mistrust of those in the Jesus freak movement who were, for the most part, very sincere in their Christian beliefs, but who also had the same outward appearances as any of the other "long haired drug cultists" that were being reported in the press.[99]

Adding fuel to this general fear and suspicion were such notorious Jesus freak groups as The Children of God, a weird group of hippie Christians who very closely fit the stereotyped image of a brainwashing cult (and who were also at times mistakenly believed to be comprised of remnants of the original Manson family, both by other hippies and by the general public).

Formed in 1968 and led by a charismatic leader named David Berg (a.k.a. "Moses") the Children of God -- sometimes known as "The Family of Love" or simply as "The Family"-- in many ways epitomized the stereotypical image of hippie Jesus freaks, espousing a combination of Christian evangelism, the counterculture revolutionary ideal and sexual freedom. They also preached a doom-and-gloom Apocalyptic theology that included the belief that California would be devastated by a major earthquake, with the entire state sliding into the sea and later, that all of the United States would be destroyed by the comet Kohoutek in 1974.

The Children of God were often to be encountered during the early 1970's -- even by this author as a young hippie teenager -- encamped by their psychedelic school buses at outdoor rock concerts where they would hand out free food while seeking to recruit new members. Their reputation for being a "cult" was well established, even in the hippie communities I was associated with. (And I can recall quite vividly how I was strenuously warned by several hippie "elders" to stay away from them as they were considered to be a "Manson-type" group).

By 1974, the Children of God were in trouble with the law and faced charges that included tax evasion, kidnapping and assault. They were also eventually embroiled in even more scandal when female members were accused of using sex to entice men who were not part of

the movement in order to convert them into cult members (a form of religious recruitment that Berg called “flirty fishing”).[100]

But this general attitude of mistrust by rural locals was by no means exclusive to hippie Jesus freak communes, but rather was extended to *all* communes in general, which in many cases, the local populace had been led to believe were nothing less than dens of iniquity and general wickedness, populated by dirty, crazy hippies on drugs.

In the introduction to his book on the hippie communes of the 1960’s, author Timothy Miller comments on the “out-of-this-world” publicity that seemed to dominate most of the media attention given to communal living in general during the 60’s, writing that:

> Both scholars and reporters embodied in their work a great range of points of view, from favorable to severely hostile, with a great many somewhere in the bemused middle (“I can’t quite believe all this!”). A good many of these works were sensationalistic, often focusing breathlessly on the casual nudity that frequently prevailed at the counter-cultural communities or on the use of psychedelics and other controlled substances that was so popular among communal and non-communal hippies alike.[101]

And regarding the effects of the media hype on public perceptions of what actually went on inside a typical hippie commune, Miller also states that:

> Sensationalism, then as now, was the order of the day for any self-respecting news outlet; so much of the coverage focused on nudity and drug use, real or rumored, and thus helped to feed the local hostility toward communes that broke out so often.[102]

It is important to understand that the true spirit that drove the counterculture to break free from the establishment’s old ideas of how to live was based firmly in the desire among hippies to form their *own* societies with their *own* standards of living that more closely reflected the hippie value system. Communes were the most logical next step toward breaking free of an establishment that was viewed by many as having proved that it was corrupt, broken-down, and past its prime.

And it is not surprising that to most of middle class, homogenized America of that period, the idea of hippies participating in such “exotic” experiments as communal living and group marriage was very much seen as a direct threat to their way of life, and as noted in the Haight

Ashbury Free Clinic study cited earlier, this was primarily because such activity represented (and to a large degree, *still* represents) a form of "deviancy" that directly threatens middle class notions of "normalcy" and "morality." That certain aspects of the hippie lifestyle were so misunderstood and that the media sought to engage in such blatant fear-mongering at the hippies' expense can, to some degree, be seen almost as a normal reaction on the part of "straight" society.

Author Rosemary Baer, whose husband was a juror during the Manson murder trial, would later write that:

> The Tate-LaBianca case, it has been said, is not so much a trial of four defendants accused of seven and a half murders, as [much as it is] a trial of the long-haired, loose-living, group-sex, drug-oriented, hippie subculture by the established culture of our society.[103]

And to further illustrate just how much the image of the "crazed hippie cultist" had colored the minds of "normal" society, consider the following from a 1996 interview with a former communard at Black Bear Ranch:

> Simple rumors and stereotypes greeted the communal pioneers in a great many places. At Black Bear Ranch the original settlers had little contact with the scattered local residents, but years later, when tensions had eased, an early communard asked a neighbor, "What did people think about us when we first came up there?" The two-word answer: "Charles Manson."[104]

To be sure, the neighbors living near many of America's hippie communes were (at first) often less than happy to have them there, an attitude that stemmed from the obvious lifestyle differences as much as anything. And for the greater part, the hostility encountered by longhaired communards came in the form of dirty looks, unkind words, and police harassment with some businesses actually posting "Hippies Not Welcome" signs. But occasionally, situations *did* erupt into outright violence. One of the worst examples of this sort of aggression happened to various inhabitants of the many hippie communes established in Taos, New Mexico (the place where Manson girl Linda Kasabian would flee to three days after the murders occurred). Beginning in the late 1960's, a huge hippie invasion of Taos had begun, much to the resentment of the entrenched locals. Author Timothy Miller writes:

> The following are just a few of the many instances of violence that occurred over a short span of time in 1969 and 1970: The Volkswagen van of a commune was

> dynamited by night; later a building on the property was burned to the ground. Hippies were brutally beaten up on the street on many occasions. A hitchhiking longhair was sentenced to jail for possession of a "concealed weapon" -- a tiny pocketknife. Vehicles were shot up in various situations. Anonymous phone calls threatened arson and murder. A hippie woman was gang-raped. A macrobiotic restaurant was destroyed. A sign appeared on a Taos building: "The only good hippie is a dead hippie. Kill." . . . The nadir of the conflict was the murder of Michael Press, a hip resident of the Kingdom of Heaven commune at Guadalupita, New Mexico on August 5, 1970, and, on that day and the next, the beating of three other members and [the] triple rape of yet another.[105]

In the case of the murder noted above, the killers were only given light sentences on a reduced charge, further illustrating just how deep the negative emotions against the hippies living there ran.

But the backlash against hippies in the wake of the Manson murders and the similar crimes and incidents noted above was by no means confined to such hippie bastions as California and New Mexico. Media sensationalism injected the new image of hippies as drugged-out murderers into the public consciousness with a powerful intensity. And the use of that image as a propaganda tool seemed to be in full force and effect all across America. Author Karlene Faith writes:

> [R]everbarations from the Manson murders affected the lives of counterculture people throughout California and beyond. Since Manson and his followers were reasonably perceived to be hippies, all hippies became suspect and ready targets for disdain and harassment. After the crime, anyone with long hair driving a Volkswagen bus, the hippie vehicle of choice, stood a good chance of being pulled over by the police . . . The "dirty hippie" stigma was radically intensified, as was adult contempt for youthful idealism . . . The fear and harassment of hippies that occurred after the crimes was as destructive to healthy communes as it was to those already dysfunctional. It was as if the dominant culture, in cahoots with the media, had been waiting for the Manson "family" to happen so that they would have "proof" that the hippie movement was no good. The antagonism between hippies and "straight" society was based on their antithetical values. In the context of social disruptions the Manson murders were a

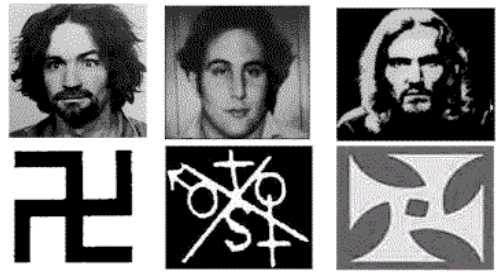
> convenient excuse for a backlash. Parents were warning their hippie kids, “See what could happen to you?”[106]

In a 1969 *Time Magazine* article about the Manson murders, a Dr. Lewis Yablonsky was quoted as saying that he “believes that there has been far more violence among the hippies than most people realize,” stating further that:

> There has always been a potential for murder . . . [M]any hippies are socially almost dead inside. Some require massive emotions to feel anything at all. They need bizarre, intensive acts to feel alive -- sexual acts, acts of violence, nudity, every kind of Dionysian thrill.[107]

The hippie movement today has mostly recovered from the liability left behind by groups like the Manson family and from once having been associated with such drug violence and other negative stereotypes. And the repeat of a similar “hippie” crime like the Manson murders, occurring during such a pivotal point in “hippie history,” seems an unlikely event.

But you can be assured that there are probably still a few people around who simply refuse to let go of the idea that experimenting with strange drugs, practicing free love and living freaky lifestyles were somehow to blame for such horrors. Hopefully, similar hysteria will be recognized for what it is the next time around.



Charles Manson, Son of Sam and the Process Church of the Final Judgment: Exploring the Alleged Connections

Fear is at the root of man's destruction of himself. Without fear there is no blame. Without blame there is no conflict. Without conflict there is no destruction. But there is fear: deep within the core of every human being it lurks like a monster, dark and intangible. Its outward effects are unmistakable. Its source is hidden.

Quote from the Process Church article *On Fear*

Have you ever seen the coyote in the desert? Watching, tuned in, completely aware. Christ on the cross, the coyote in the desert -- it's the same thing, man. The coyote is beautiful. He moves through the desert delicately, aware of everything, looking around. He hears every sound, smells every smell, sees everything that moves. He's in a state of total paranoia, and total paranoia is total awareness.

Quote from Charles Manson about "getting the fear," as published in the June 1970 issue of *Rolling Stone* magazine

Author's Note: Beginning in the 1980's, Americans -- and later, many European countries -- found themselves in the grip of a contemporary urban legend that was later dubbed the "Satanic Panic." This modern day witch hunt included tales of so-called "Satanic ritual abuse," stories of children being preyed upon by "occultists" and alleged plots by organized groups of Satanists who were allegedly bent on world domination through murder and every kind of crime and horror imaginable. Central to many of these theories were the purported ties between the infamous Charles Manson family, New York serial killer David Berkowitz (the so-called "Son of Sam") and the Process Church of the Final Judgment. Included in this chapter is a brief history of the Process Church (a group whose name has long been bandied about as a shadowy, sinister, Satanist group) and a close examination of the alleged "connections" between the Process and both the Manson and Son of Sam murders. But first, a little history…

Preface: A Pandora's Box

If you listened to some people, you would have to believe that America and the rest of the world was in the grip of a Satanic plague of Biblical proportions. Some see Satanists lurking behind every tree and behind this alleged menace, a nefarious cabal of devil-worshiping murder junkies, bent on world destruction and either led or inspired by the shadowy, sinister, "Satanist" Process Church. (The Process Church of the Final Judgment, a strange and highly controversial religious group that "worshipped" both Christ and Satan, will be discussed at length further in this story).

And incredibly, this idea had been given credence by the very people whom many of us had been taught to trust all of our lives, including law enforcement officials, politicians and religious leaders, some who had become self-styled "experts" on Satanism and alleged "occult" crimes.[108]

So just where did it all begin?

Flashback to 1980 when psychiatrist Lawrence Pazder published the book *Michelle Remembers*. This book, advertised as non-fiction, created the first tale of a "repressed memory" of "Satanic ritual abuse," centering on Pazder's "client" Michelle Smith (whom later evidence would show was actually his wife). In this book, Pazder claimed that when Michelle was a child, she had been sexually abused by Satanists and that her memory of the abuse had been repressed in her mind until she had undergone specialized therapy provided by Pazder. (Pazder is credited for being the person who originally coined the phrase "ritual abuse").

According to this story, Michelle had been abused by members of a "Satanic coven" headquartered in Victoria, British Columbia during the 1950's. Among the many ghoulish and extraordinary claims made in the narrative are tales of Michelle being placed in a car with a corpse which was then purposely crashed; being locked in a cage full of snakes while naked; and being taken to a cemetery where she was lowered into an open grave and then covered with dead cats. (Michelle also claimed to have a scar on her body that was caused by Satan wrapping his barbed tail around her neck!).

Not surprisingly, the book became a best seller. However, a 1990 London newspaper that conducted an investigation into Smith's background revealed that the entire tale was a fraud. But the fact that the story had been exposed as fabrication did not stop *Michelle Remembers* from becoming the catalyst for a flurry of similar accusations aimed not only at "Satanists" and "witches," but at virtually all other occultists whose religious beliefs were viewed as being beyond the norm.[109]

Following closely on the heels of *Michelle Remembers*, other sensational reports of so-called "repressed memories" soon began to surface, this time centered on women who allegedly had been forced to act as baby-breeders for organized Satanic groups, ostensibly so that their children could be murdered in ritualistic sacrifices to Satan. One of the most fantastic examples of this claim surfaced in the book *Satan's Underground* by Lauren Stratford and Johanna Michaelson, a conservative Christian author.[110]

Stratford's book was subsequently exposed as an almost total sham by the non-fundamentalist Christian magazine *Cornerstone*. In an excellent commentary written by *Cornerstone* in order to debunk Stratford's claims, the authors note:

> A synopsis of the story told in *Satan's Underground* is very difficult to produce. The book is missing dates, places, outside events, and even the true names of the principal characters necessary for placing the story in an historical and geographical context. Stratford says, "In part this is for my own protection, but it also serves to remind you that what I've endured is not limited to one city or region. I have also changed names and descriptions of many key figures in order to protect the victims."

The *Cornerstone* article goes on to comment that "*Satan's Underground* is one of the most sexually and violently graphic contemporary Christian books we know" and that as far as such sensational claims were concerned "one may believe them because 'they're too bizarre not to be true,' but they should never be substituted for careful, accurate, and truthful reporting."

But the damage had already been done. Soon the daytime television talk shows and other forms of the tabloid press were awash with stories from other self-proclaimed "breeders," and the *Cornerstone* expose was practically ignored.[111]

Another accusation to come along was one that was guaranteed to strike fear in the heart of any healthy human being: that groups of Satanists were preying upon children in the nation's day-care centers. This tale was first concocted by a woman named Judy Johnson (who would later be diagnosed as an acute paranoid schizophrenic). Johnson alleged that her child had been subjected to sexual abuse during Satanic rituals while at the McMartin Preschool in Los Angeles, California. A modern-day witch-hunt soon got underway, led by sincere, but misguided prosecutors, imposters calling themselves "ritual abuse therapists," and

frightened parents. The case generated much sordid and sensationalized press coverage and soon a flood of similar accusations began to spread across the United States and abroad.

Ignored in the ensuing frenzy was the person who had made the original accusations: Judy Johnson was later found dead in her own home by police four months before the McMartin trial started in 1987, having succumbed to liver disease resulting from her chronic alcoholism. The subsequent trial would last for six years without a single conviction ever being obtained. The cost to taxpayers for the trial ran into the millions of dollars, ruined the reputations and lives of innocent people and needlessly traumatized children at the hands of quack therapists, all due to the accusations of a drunken, delusional person.[112]

And the Charles Manson murder case has always been fertile ground for theories of a Satanic nature to grow in. Manson and his followers were convicted for nine murders, including the gory 1969 Tate-LaBianca slayings and were suspected by prosecutor Vincent Bugliosi (and others) of possibly having committed as many as thirty-five murders.

There have been a number of books and articles written since the 1969 Manson murders occurred that have attempted to create overly sinister, Satanic connections between Charles Manson and the Process Church of the Final Judgment and more recently, to the “Son of Sam” murders committed by serial killer David Berkowitz. But what I have discovered is that, with very few exceptions, the majority of these accusations are based primarily on either biased information sources or are the result of highly questionable speculation and theorizing on the part of some writers. When held up to close scrutiny, most of these alleged “connections” fall apart completely or evaporate into the same thin air from which they were pulled. I have found that this is often due to the fact that the sources for some of the more outlandish information were either non-existent to begin with or come from less-than credible individuals whom some researchers are all too willing to consider, especially if what the source has to say strengthens their case for a Satanic conspiracy.

Additionally, it has also been my experience that when it comes to trying to pin down some of these incredible assertions, those making them will sometimes seek refuge in the claim (as noted previously in the case of Lauren Stratford, and further in this narrative) that their source’s names cannot be revealed because doing so would “place their lives in danger,” the most convenient of all cop-outs, to be sure.

As you will see, there are some individuals for whom the Process Church/Manson/Son of Sam “connection” is the smoking gun that serves

as the foundation for their evidence of a “global Satanic cult conspiracy,” and for a few of these people, the old adage, “Where there’s smoke, there’s fire,” serves them well enough to include the most tenuous links in order to add punch to a favored conspiracy theory. But it is my opinion that perhaps these individuals would be better advised to remember the wise words of author/researcher John Keel, who once wrote: “Where there’s smoke, there may be a smudge pot.” (Later on in the narrative, I refer to those types of individuals as “Smoke Pumpers” because they have pumped so much smoke into the case through wild and unsubstantiated allegations that it has now become nearly impossible to be able to see clearly where the truth begins and ends at this point).

This story will try to set some of the record straight. It will also show that the Process Church was not truly a Satanic religion, but rather a group of well-meaning, but perhaps misguided, “new age” Christians who made use of Satanic trappings and imagery that were sprinkled liberally into their philosophy. Ditto for Charles Manson and David Berkowitz.

I come qualified to make that statement and to write an article that discusses Satanism and other alleged occult connections within conspiracy theories: I was a mid-level member of a certain high-profile occult religion established here in America and abroad for close to a decade and have been a serious occult scholar for over twenty five years. As such, I have not only researched topics such as this along with other interested and prominent occultists, but have had access to almost every source that relates to the occult via an extensive and privately maintained database. (I will not try to suggest that my opinions expressed here are the final words on this subject; indeed, I hope my comments will generate responses from other interested researchers who have additional information that I may not be aware of).

This story begins in a small section of San Francisco known as the “Haight-Ashbury,” so-named because that neighborhood stood at the intersection of those two (soon to be world famous) streets.

In The Beginning, There Was Haight

The decade of the 1960’s marked one of the most influential periods in the history of America. It became an era for the “waking up” of humanity in the form of new social consciousness, human and civil rights, new religious thought and the exploration of altered states of reality and alternative lifestyles. And it was in the Haight-Ashbury district of San Francisco, California that this new awareness was exemplified in a most vivid manner.

The Haight-Ashbury area in the 1960's was a true Mecca for the nation's disenchanted young people and, as if drawn by some great cosmic force, young people came by the thousands to participate in a great social experiment: a mass exercise in free will.

Radical politics, free love, new spiritual values, and an "anything goes" mentality were the standards of the day in the Haight and all seemed to be linked by a common thread: the desire to break away from the mental programming of commonly accepted belief systems of the preceding generations which seemed to have become useless and untrue.

There appeared to be no middle ground regarding the hippie movement and the Haight phenomenon itself. To "ordinary" people, those involved with the hippie counterculture were either viewed with amusement or seen as frightening or insane. Accordingly, the attitudes of Americans regarding the "hippies" ranged from joyful support all the way to intense hatred.

The Haight seemed to move on its own wings, creating its own styles of dress and grooming, original musical sounds, and even a community newspaper called *The San Francisco Oracle*. And in many of the Haight's stores, along with the posters, incense, beads, pipes, and other paraphernalia, were books that focused on Native American shamanism, the European occult and pagan philosophies, Eastern religion and metaphysics, with Zen Buddhism being the prevailing religious leaning of the hippie movement. Indeed, many aspects of the "occult" and other mystical schools of thought were being revived and studied by a whole new generation.[113]

As such, the Haight was fertile ground for any new or slightly unusual religion to take root in and it was in 1967, during the so-called "Summer of Love," that the Process Church of the Final Judgment and Charles Manson showed up on the scene.

The Family That Slays Together, Stays Together

In March of 1967, Charles Manson had just been released from a long stretch in prison and quickly immersed himself in the hippie scene of the Haight. It was during this time period and later that Manson crossed paths with a large variety of people, including political types, movie stars, freaks, bikers, occultists, and members of many "alternative" religions. (People who lived in Haight-Ashbury during this time period and who later wrote about the experience, remember that the Process Church was only one of many "beyond the norm" groups that had taken up residence there).

While living in the Haight, Manson attracted a sizeable number of hippie followers, most of them young girls, who would form the nucleus of what was to later become known as the “Manson family.”

On the evening of August 8, 1969, Charles Manson’s “family” murdered actress Sharon Tate (wife of film director Roman Polanski) and four others at the Tate residence in the Benedict Canyon area of Los Angeles. The next night, a wealthy couple named Rosemary and Leno LaBianca, who lived in the Los Feliz section of Los Angeles near Griffith Park, were also murdered in their home by the same group.

In both cases, the victims had been subjected to extremely violent and bloody “over-kill,” having been viscously stabbed, shot and bludgeoned to death. Adding to this horror, cryptic messages, written in the victim’s own blood, were left on the walls and other areas of the crime scenes and in the case of Leno LaBianca, the word “War” was even carved into his own flesh by one of the killers.

Later to become known as the “Tate-LaBianca” murders, the crimes sent a shudder of fear through households all across mainstream America and the world. Following Manson’s arrest three months after the crimes, both the tabloid and mainstream press issued many sensationalized accounts of the murders. Many of these early press stories portrayed the crimes as having been committed by wild-eyed hippie flower children armed with knives, who, while high on LSD, had killed the victims in a grisly “ritualistic” fashion, from the outset implying that the murders were occult-related in some way. For example, a December 2, 1969 story in the Los Angeles Times carried the headline, “Wild Cult Blamed In Tate Slayings,” noting in the subtext how “an *occult* band of hippies, directed by a leader who calls himself ‘Jesus,’ committed the five killings.” Yet another news story was headlined with “Wild-Bearded Hippie Chief Key Figure in Tate Murders Probe.” (Italics supplied).[114]

At the end of a sensational trial that lasted for ten months, Manson and three of his followers, Susan Atkins, Leslie Van Houten and Patricia Krenwinkel, were convicted for the Tate-LaBianca murders and sentenced to death (later commuted to life imprisonment when the death penalty was held to be unconstitutional by the Supreme Court).

That the Manson family was comprised of young hippies-turned-bloody-murderers would later result in a real backlash of hate and fear against those immersed in the “counterculture” (a frightening fact that is discussed in-depth later in this book). Indeed, Susan Atkins would be quoted as saying, “We wanted to do a crime that would shock the world, that the world would have to stand up and take notice” and would claim later that the Manson murders had been committed in order to “instill fear

into the establishment." (Prosecutor, Vincent Bugliosi, would claim at trial that Manson's motive for the Tate-LaBianca murders was in order to ignite an apocalyptic race war called "Helter Skelter," as "prophesized" in a Beatles song of the same name).

Manson, an ex-convict who had studied various occult doctrines and methods while in prison, seemed to possess what many of his followers (and later, even his prosecutor) described as "magical" and "hypnotic" powers. Possessed of a very strong force of will and a commanding personal presence, Manson had in fact convinced many of his followers that he was the reincarnation of Jesus Christ and many of them believed that he could actually read their minds. Manson often referred to himself as both Christ *and* the Devil, in part because of his identification with the Gnostic god *Abraxas*, a deity said to transcend both light and darkness and who could personify both "Christ" and "Devil" simultaneously. (Prosecutor Vincent Bugliosi would later call Manson a "Mephistophelean guru" during his trial summation and even claimed that Manson's hypnotic stare once caused his normally reliable wristwatch to stop functioning).[115]

Charles Manson's involvement in the Tate-LaBianca (and other) homicides soon gave rise to the accusation that he and his followers might have had connections with area occult groups, an assertion that has long been a staple for the conspiracy-minded when writing about the case. And while the Manson "occult connection" does have some basis in fact, no one has ever presented hard evidence that Manson or any of his inner-circle of followers had long-standing affiliations with organized occult or Satanic groups prior to or after the murders had occurred.

Manson & his "Universal Life" symbol

In particular, it is Manson's alleged ties to the Process Church that has fueled much of this sort of speculation, beginning in 1971 with the publication of a book by Ed Sanders and more recently, with Maury Terry's 1987 book. (Sanders and Terry, authors of best-selling books about the Manson and Son of Sam cases, are the most blatant advocates of a Process Church/Manson "connection" and both of their claims are examined closely further on in this narrative).

That Manson and the Process would eventually cross paths now seems almost inevitable. Manson's history during this period is well documented in a number of other books and a full account is not necessary here. The evolution of the strange and mysterious Process Church of the Final Judgment, however, requires some background.

As It Was: A History of the Process Church

That the Process Church would be singled out as a major influence on Charles Manson and later, on other alleged "occult murders," is not surprising. The strange philosophies of the Process Church, with their proclamation that an Apocalyptic end of the world was at hand (an event they called "The Final Judgment") and especially the fact that the group advocated a doctrine of ultimate reconciliation and unity that called for loving both Christ *and* Satan, placed them in an almost perfect position for being misunderstood by the public and by other Christian groups.

This unification of the two opposing forces thought to be embodied by Christ and Satan in Process philosophy seems to be rooted firmly in the Zen Buddhist idea of seeking the reconciliation of opposites in order to remake them into harmonious wholes. What I have learned is that the beliefs of the Process involved a precise framework for explaining the very essence of life and as a means to bring their four identified -- and diametrically opposed -- "gods" (Jehovah, Lucifer, Satan, and Christ) together in order to establish a new sort of Universal harmony. As such, one could not follow the true path of the Process if they attempted to only focus on "Satan." Accordingly, it is important to note that such a notion has almost nothing to do with classic ideas about "Satan" as they are expressed in the practices of "traditional" Satanic groups. (My own study of Process philosophy indicated to me that all references to "Satan" were strictly in the metaphorical sense).

However, the Process' cultivation of their own public image did little to dispel any of the Satanic rumors. Process worship sessions were usually held in a room that displayed both a Christian cross *and* a Goat of Mendes, a winged goat figure with a pentagram on its forehead often mistaken as a "Satanic" symbol, but which is in fact associated with "astral light" as its creator, Eliphas Levi, originally intended. (As such, it would seem that the Process' use of the Goat of Mendes to symbolize "Satan" was a misidentification on their part).

The established uniform of Process street ministers consisted of dressing in all black clothing and wearing purple capes that were adorned with occult symbols. (The color black was considered by the Process to be symbolic of their mourning the fate of the human race in the coming Final Judgment). The men sported neatly trimmed beards and shoulder-length hair. That Process members, so adorned as they roamed about the streets of major cities, caused a few raised eyebrows goes without saying.

The Process Church was formed in 1962 in the Mayfair district of London, England. Robert DeGrimston Moore and Mary Anne MacLean,

the leaders of the Process, were at that time mid-level members in the London Scientology movement, founded by science-fiction writer and occultist L. Ron Hubbard.

The core beliefs of Scientology are that each of us is neither mind nor body, but rather spiritual beings who can free ourselves from all inhibitions, repressive behaviors, and mental illnesses by removing negative mental imprints (referred to as “engrams,” a sort of “psychic scar”). Hubbard was a former disciple of Aleister Crowley and also had ties to the American chapter of the Ordo Templi Orientis (Aleister Crowley’s famous occult order) and, subsequently, to the O.T.O’s American head, the enigmatic Jack Parsons. (Parsons’ own highly unique story is discussed in detail in my book, *Labyrinth13*).

Scientology in 1963 was little more than a pseudo-psychoanalysis technique and it was during one of the so-called “E-Meter” sessions that Robert DeGrimston and Mary Anne MacLean first met. (Mary MacLean, a former prostitute, was allegedly embroiled in the infamous Christine Keeler-Profumo affair that rocked the English Parliament in the 1960’s).

This relationship between the couple soon led to marriage and the two left Scientology to form their own group, calling it “Compulsions Analysis.” Their technique, or “process,” differed little from that of Scientology but for one admirable exception: The Moores had left Hubbard’s group because they felt that he (Hubbard) was basing too much of his philosophy on wild speculation that had no basis in fact. The Moores desired a more objective approach in their techniques and the ability to really achieve something with the system they were exploring. They soon attracted close to thirty adherents and the name “Compulsions Analysis” was changed to what they had been calling their technique all along: The Process.

It was early 1966 that DeGrimston (he had dropped the last name Moore) began composing a semi-religious scripture called *The Logics*, which dealt mostly with aspects of the human personality and provided theoretical background for the process sessions. Also, the concept of multiple “gods” and a belief in a higher power began to emerge into their philosophy and were blended into the growing analysis techniques.

Goat of Mendes

The Process, which started out as a psychotherapy group, was now evolving into a genuine religion and would later become legally incorporated as a church, both in England and in America.

The Process later identified four gods of the universe, Jehovah, Lucifer, Satan, and Christ, each believed to represent different elements and human capabilities and which were employed metaphorically to symbolize human archetypes. Each of these gods was thought to contain a necessary facet of the complete "process." The Process Church technique taught that an individual should try to identify that aspect of each god in his/herself and attempt to unify the opposing forces into one composite power, thereby creating a unified self who was at peace with his/her inner being, in harmony with the Universe and ready for the coming "Final Judgment." (One Process member explained to me that this "Final Judgment" was not considered to be an actual, apocalyptic world event, but rather was a metaphor for change based upon the single individual and that every day a man judges his own actions and can access whether or not what he has achieved will lead him to either salvation or damnation).

This idea of Universal harmony was reflected in many of the Process symbols, one of which shows four P's coming together to form an iron cross/swastika-like image. (It has been alleged, but never proven, that former members of the Process later formed an organization called the "Four P Movement," one of many supposed Process-splinter groups that would later be subjected to much unfounded and unsubstantiated speculation by authors such as Ed Sanders and Maury Terry. Process members that I interviewed claimed that the whole "Four P Movement" story was pure disinformation, possibly created and disseminated by rival members of the Church of Scientology).

Process "Four P" Symbol

In the summer of 1963, the Process membership, led by DeGrimston and Mary Anne, pooled their funds and moved en masse to Nassau, Bahamas, and then, to an abandoned coconut plantation, located on a remote stretch of beach on the Yucatan peninsula in Xtul, Mexico. It was during the "Xtul period" that DeGrimston began to further formulate his philosophy in a series of "channeled" writings which would later become known as *The Xtul Dialogues*, essays that only top-ranking members would be allowed to read in later years. (My use of the term "channeling," refers to the technique where one acts as a medium through which a higher power allegedly expresses itself, much the same function as a spirit medium or priest would perform).

The Xtul Dialogues were composed in the form of eight lectures between a student and a teacher. The only god specifically identified by name in *The Xtul Dialogues* is Jehovah, "god of strength, wrath, and nature." The complete pantheon of Process gods were not specified until a full year later, and specifically detailed in the aforementioned scripture

The Logics. This fact disputes an outlandish claim made later by researcher Ed Sanders (author of *The Family*, one of the first books on the Manson case), that the Process began to worship Satan while at Xtul and to practice human sacrifice.[116]

The Process lived at Xtul for close to a year and it became equivalent in meaning to them as did Christ's forty days in the desert. (Allegedly, it was while at Xtul that DeGrimston came to believe that he was the reincarnation of Jesus Christ). At this time they were involved in intensive studies of group telepathy and also delved heavily into the Old Testament of the Christian Bible (a book that was to influence the Process greatly in later years, such as the renaming of members with titles like "Father Moses" and "Brother Abraham").

The communal living at Xtul was soon brought to an end in 1966 by the destructive power of Hurricane Inez. 200 mile per hour winds battered the Mexican coast, destroying the plantation but sparing the Processeans. Soon after, the majority of the group, including the DeGrimstons, moved back to London. They had come to Xtul as members of a psychotherapy sect and left as members of a cohesive community and founders of the newly religious Process Church of the Final Judgment.

After the return to England, the group was to encounter their first bit of bad press from a negative London *Sunday Telegraph* article titled, *The Mind Benders of Mayfair*, instigated in part by the parents of some of the Process' underage members who feared that their children had been brainwashed by the group.

While in London, the Process began publishing a magazine and developing rituals to add to the therapy sessions. Robert DeGrimston wrote another book called *The Tide of the End*, which has been described as being "emotional and poetic," "an apocalyptic condemnation of the world," and "a prophecy of the coming millennium."[117]

The Tide of the End is actually a collection of thirteen short books delivered in seven "phases." One of the books, titled *As It Is*, was considered by the Process to be the most meaningful of the series and at the core of their philosophy. That book is essentially a warning to the reader to avoid "living a lie" and to "abandon ignorance and suppression within and embrace true reality-As It Is." This led to the use of a "Do What Thou Wilt," Aleister Crowley-like motto of "As it is-So be it" as a greeting or farewell among Process members. Soon after the book was written, the DeGrimstons embarked on a tour of Europe and Canada, eventually arriving in America at New Orleans, Louisiana, where the first American chapter of the Process Church was officially established. It

was also in New Orleans that they formally adopted the name “Process Church of the Final Judgment,” becoming a legally recognized religion.

Upon the return to England from Xtul, the Process had also identified other gods beside Jehovah and now included Satan, Lucifer, and Christ in their rituals and publications.

Image from Process pamphlet

They must have been quite a startling sight in 1967 New Orleans as they paraded about with their long hair and beards (a practice that had been adopted at Xtul and which had Old Testament significance to them) wearing black turtlenecks and slacks, purple capes with a red Mendes Goat emblazoned on the back and a silver crucifix worn around the neck, handing out literature proclaiming that the end of the world was near.

They had also begun to lead German Shepard dog around on chains, perhaps in emulation of the DeGrimstons, who owned several of the animals themselves. Maury Terry, author of *The Ultimate Evil*, a book about the Son of Sam murders and the alleged ties those crimes had to the Process, would later try to make much of the fact that the Process owned German Shepards and would claim that the group used these dogs for ritual sacrifice and blood-drinking rites.[118]

William Bainbridge, who wrote one of the more objective and rational histories of the Process in a book called *Satan’s Power*, tells a different story: that the Process considered animals to be perfect life forms to be held in the highest regard. In fact, Mary Ann DeGrimston was quite active in the anti-vivisectionist movement and Robert DeGrimston once wrote a searing anti-vivisection pamphlet, ironically (and perhaps prophetically) titled *The Ultimate Sin*.[119]

The New Orleans Process chapter attracted about a dozen new members. Interestingly enough, the Process claimed that they were not seeking to convert the masses, but were interested in locating only those people whom they considered to be “natural” Processeans. Robert DeGrimston had refined his theories about the end of the world and found much to base his philosophy on in the *Book of Matthew* and the *Book of Revelation* of the Christian Bible, including the number of the chosen people that would escape the coming holocaust: 144,000. He believed that this was the number of Processeans who would live through Armageddon, or “The Final Judgment.” To the extent that the group felt they had a mission to the world, they believed that it was to present themselves publicly so that those people who were already Processeans without realizing it, could come forward and join.

It was while they were in New Orleans that The Process developed their initiatory grade system. New members were called Messengers. They were also described as “Outside Processeans,” or “O.P.’s” because it was assumed at first that they would never be able to join the inner core of the group because they had not shared in the Xtul experience. (However, several of the new Messengers rose to positions of higher rank and later the term O.P. was used to refer to members not yet admitted to the heart of Process society). Members who had been to Xtul and others later admitted to the inner circle were called “Inner Processeans” or “I.P.’s.” The Initiatory grades consisted of the *Omega*, the highest title within the Process, and at the time, held only by Robert and Mary Anne DeGrimston. The Omega’s lieutenants were called Masters and were in charge of the day-to-day decision-making. Next came the Priests, below them the Prophets, and finally the Messengers.

The Process also began the practice of taking sacred names. As mentioned earlier, they adopted the practice of taking Biblical names while at Xtul and this became the standard practice and policy for all new members. Masters and Priests had names such as “Father Cain” or “Mother Isis,” while Prophets and Messengers used the title “Brother” or “Sister.” This new custom was much in tune with the collective family-like relations within the Process; in fact, “The Family” was one of their affectionate names used to describe the entire congregation. The 144,000 Processeans were supposed to be marked with the “Seal of God” on their foreheads (as prophesized in the Book of Revelation) and as such, were thought to be instantly recognizable to the Mothers and Fathers.

Another bit of evidence that suggests that the Process was not the bloodthirsty devil worshiping cult of those vivid imaginations that would come later is the fact that many potential members were turned away in New Orleans and elsewhere because the Process officers considered them to be merely “thrill seekers” and “dead beats.” (It must be remembered that the original core membership of the Process came from London’s upper class of society and the group continued throughout its existence to cull members of “high quality”). Admirably, The Process also set up several soup kitchens and ran programs to help feed and shelter homeless people.

In December of 1967, one Father Cain and Father Moses journeyed to San Francisco as a result of a vision that was experienced by the group during a ritual in New Orleans. They began setting up a Process chapter house in the Haight that was in the form of a coffee house with “Sabbath Assemblies” gathered in an “alpha ritual room” and “telepathy developing circles” as they had practiced while in Xtul. (They unsuccessfully tried to form a union with Anton LaVey’s Church of Satan, who dismissed them as “kooks”).

Another effort was made to recruit members of California biker gangs, (as Charles Manson would later attempt to do) both for the instant notoriety and security that these groups could provide.

The New Orleans chapter closed in February of 1968 and moved to San Francisco for about three months, later heading to Los Angeles, and then to Greenwich Village in New York City. (This move was prompted in part due to a rivalry between the Process and a Scientology group that was threatening to report certain Process members to local authorities for having expired visas). The Process eventually moved back to Europe with the original core membership, plus several American converts, leaving behind some 200 new Process members in the United States.

This core group roamed about Europe for a while, even attempting to set up a world headquarters in Aleister Crowley's old Abbey of Thelema in Cefalu, Sicily. The American chapters in New York and Massachusetts remained active as late as 1974 before the Process splintered and eventually faded away.

Exploring the Manson/Process/Son of Sam "Connections"

My background of the Process stops here. Now let's take a closer look at the alleged ties between the Process, Charles Manson, Son of Sam and the mythical "global Satanic cult conspiracy."

The core philosophy of the Process involved the ultimate unification of opposites. One of the key doctrines of the Process Church was the reconciliation between Christ and Satan that the group believed would occur in time for the Apocalypse or "Final Judgment." The logic was simple and took Christ's teachings one step beyond good and evil. The following is reprinted from *The Unity of Christ and Satan*, a Process publication:

> "Christ said, 'Love thine enemies'. Christ's enemy was Satan and Satan's enemy was Christ. Through love enmity is destroyed. Through love Saint and Sinner destroy the enmity between them. Through love, Christ and Satan have destroyed their enmity and come together for the End. Christ to Judge, Satan to execute Judgment. The Judgment is wisdom, the execution of the Judgment is love."

One of Manson's raps to his followers was in a similar vein in that he preached that the act of killing someone was actually an act of love based on how a person ultimately judge's him or herself. Manson believed that all people had the potential for both good and evil, i.e., that they carried both "Christ and Satan" within themselves and that each of us has the capacity to offer either life to another human being, in "Christ-like" wisdom, or to act on a "Satanic" impulse to kill them. In this extreme reasoning, both were seen as acts of love because both were judgments made within that same "Universal" understanding.

Manson taught his followers that there was no such thing as a separation between life and death, that all things in life are linked to each other. Accordingly, a person who killed another was only killing a part of his or herself or simply striking out at their own reflection in the cosmic mirror. (The idea that all humans are part of one undivided totality is a bit of wisdom that obviously stems from the LSD-inspired "we are all one" revelation and ego-less state commonly experienced by users of that psychedelic drug).

Tex Watson, a male member of the Manson family who was the chief killer in the Tate-LaBianca murders, put it this way:

> Charlie had made us see that once you die to your ego, once you strip yourself down to a perfect being all body, like some monkey or a coyote free in the wild, not thinking, not willing once you do that, fear doesn't exist anymore. You've already died, everything except that animal body of yours, so even death can't frighten you. You are free. Free to live, free to die. Free to kill.[120]

As the examples above demonstrate, those ideas of Manson's mimic DeGrimston's logic somewhat in *The Unity of Christ and Satan*, but they do so in a most extreme fashion that is well outside the boundaries of the original intent.

DeGrimston's message in *The Unity of Christ and Satan* taught that a harmonious melding of those two opposing forces would bring about ultimate peace, noting quite logically how "You cannot create a battle with only one army." William Sims Bainbridge would comment on the overall concept in DeGrimston's *Unity* argument by noting how:

> *The Unity of Christ and Satan* had three aspects. First, it encouraged acceptance of one's darker, socially suppressed impulses, private and subconscious longings that a Freudian might call primary process phenomena connected with the id. Second, it was an attempt to bridge the gaps between people of very

> different needs and personalities, to achieve cooperation where hostility had reigned. Third, it was a structural theory of the origins of existence, part of an intellectual world . . . Again and again, popular writers have selectively quoted Processean scripture, for example, extracting the most horrendous passages from *Satan on War* and presented it as proof that members of the cult were murderers, or worse. But the cult's doctrines held that destructive impulses lurked within every one of us, not within members alone, and they used the imagery of Satan's "lower aspect" to analyze this part of human nature. The scriptures employed dynamic metaphors and emotional dramatizations of abstract concepts; it is a poor writer indeed who fails to recognize poetic symbolism when he or she reads it.[121]

The Process Church wrote a lot of elegant, cryptic, and even frightening essays to explain their philosophies, but any references to killing or death -- as Bainbridge notes above -- were actually meant only in symbolic or spiritual terms, such as the "killing" of a negative aspect of one's personality through Process therapy. For example, Robert DeGrimston wrote a series of statements from Jehovah, Lucifer, and Satan in the 1968 *War* issue of the Process magazine, titled, *The Gods on War*. In these essays, each god gives a statement independently of the others, but it is obvious that the reader is expected to follow the Process technique of merging all three statements together in order to get the intended message.

Manson, on the other hand, apparently took many of the Process writings and scriptures *literally* and it is quite possible that the Tate-LaBianca and other murders are a result of his misinterpretation of them. In fact, Father Adam, once head of the Boston, Massachusetts chapter of the Process, told a reporter that, "Manson has obviously got hold of some of our ideas from somewhere and distorted them in a particular way. It is unfortunate. If we had had the opportunity to speak with him, we could have avoided that series of very brutal killings."[122]

There is a body of strong circumstantial evidence that tends to show Manson *was* heavily influenced by the Process, but to blame the Process Church for the behavior of a person like Charles Manson would be like blaming the Pope for the People's Temple massacre in Jonestown. William Bainbridge commented that, "No real (Processeans) that I knew ever made the mistake of thinking these words (the Process scriptures) were commandments that required physical action."[123]

And Process member Father Ely told a reporter, “Very Satanic members find it difficult to fit into the Church. They cannot function as Inside Processeans.”[124]

In August of 1969, Manson and his followers committed the Tate-LaBianca murders. Soon after their capture and arrest, rumors began to spread that the Manson Family was a Process-splinter group. The DeGrimstons originally feared that Manson may have indeed been a renegade former member, but after seeing Manson’s picture, neither they nor anyone else in their group could recall ever having seen or met him. As a precaution, they finally sent two leading Process members, Father John and Brother Matthew to interview Manson and to be interviewed by Vincent Bugliosi, the chief prosecutor in Manson’s trial. Bugliosi, by virtue of a good prosecutor’s nature, was not entirely convinced by Father John’s and Brother Matthew’s claim of innocence of any involvement with the Tate-LaBianca case, but lacking any tangible evidence, never brought any Process members into court during Manson’s trial.

Bugliosi, while interviewing Manson, asked him if he knew Robert Moore or Robert DeGrimston. Manson denied knowing anyone named DeGrimston, but said that he knew Robert Moore. According to Bugliosi, Manson said, “You’re looking at him, Moore and I are one in the same.” Bugliosi later wrote that he took Manson’s statement to mean that Manson felt that he and Moore thought alike. It is possible that Manson had indeed met Moore in 1967 during an alleged visit that Moore/DeGrimston made to a house in Topanga Canyon known as the “spiral staircase,” a sometime Manson Family hangout. It is more likely that Manson had simply heard *about* Moore, as Manson at one time lived only two blocks away from Process member Brother Ely on Cole Street in Haight-Ashbury.[125]

The *Death* issue of the Process magazine in 1971 did contain a brief article written by Manson, titled *Pseudo-profundity in Death*, in which Manson describes death as “To fall off into endless dream, becoming the dream of total self. Death goes to where life comes from. Total awareness, closing the circle, bringing the soul to “Now.” Ceasing to be, to become a world within yourself” and “Death is peace from this world’s madness and paradise in my own self” . . . “Now” is and will be as it has always been --indestructible, indescribable. (Writings of such other “underground” notables as Marianne Faithful and Salvador Dali appeared in that same issue).

But to feature a story by Manson after having tried to publicly disavow him earlier at least makes the Process guilty of one of the worst public relations moves in history! And by this time, public relations for the Process were extremely poor. Many other rumors were circulating that

linked the Process to nefarious and baffling phenomenon appearing in other parts of the country. During the mid-1970's, weird animal mutilations began to occur in parts of the Midwest and rumors started to spread that a sinister Satanic cult called the "Xtul Group" was responsible. This rumor, of course, had no real basis in fact, and was even challenged by animal pathologists who determined that most of the animals died of natural causes. (The myth of the Satanists-as-animal-mutilators persists to this day). This charge against the Process was particularly absurd in light of the known anti-vivisectionist stance that they held.

Enter the Smoke Pumpers: Ed Sanders

But perhaps the most fearsome assault on the Process was delivered by Ed Sanders, author of *The Family*, one of the first books to emerge about the Manson murders.

Sanders, an outspoken member of New York's hippie community during the early 1960's, was an anti-war activist, poet and a musician with the former rock group *The Fugs*. (Sanders' face even appeared on the cover of the February 17, 1967 edition of *Life Magazine* for an article titled *The Other Culture*. In that article, *Life* refers to Sanders as the leader of New York's "other culture," referring to Sanders' outspokenness as a member of the hippie subculture in New York City during that time. It is interesting to note that Charles Manson himself would also later appear on the cover of the December 12, 1969 issue of *Life*).[126]

As the first member of the "underground press" to investigate the Manson case, Sanders' book was written in the sort of beatnik-inspired, hipster prose that has become quite common with many of today's authors.

Apparently, Sanders was incensed to learn that the press was not only portraying Manson as a sort of "hippie Messiah," but was in fact using the Manson case in order to tarnish the image of the hippie movement as a whole. According to one source, Sanders believed that rather than there being anything intrinsically wrong with the hippie lifestyle, it was Manson's (alleged) occult associations that were responsible for turning him and his group toward murder. Researching and writing *The Family* was Sanders' attempt to establish those occult connections and hopefully, clear the hippie name from any allegations of wrongdoing or associations with Manson (quite an honorable and commendable mission, to be sure).[127]

But although *The Family* contains much factual information, Sanders' research becomes shaky when trying to pin down Manson's alleged occult activity. It appears he relied heavily on second and even third-hand testimony, whether it was through people claiming to have

known Manson or through the infamous “friend of a friend,” a particularly dubious source that virtually defines the classic definition of hearsay.

Indeed, Sanders’ own words in the introduction to *The Family* seems to bear this out as he recounts that during his investigation he “wrote down literally everything I heard or saw related to the so-called Manson family.” Sanders also stated that he used many “anonymous” sources, implying heavily that he did so because people feared for their lives if identified (which becomes a rather curious sentiment when one considers that Sanders himself seems to have moved about in that very scene with impunity).[128]

It is my opinion that Sanders’ examples of “occult evidence” bear little resemblance to any legitimate occult practices, which leaves this author to closely question just what sort of “acid test” of credibility Sanders used to base his final analysis on. As such, it would appear that Sanders was apparently willing to listen to anyone who had a horror story to tell and simply reported everything as solid fact with virtually no attention paid to verifying details. (To this day, Sanders has never revealed the sources for most of his information).

In his book’s first edition, Sanders devoted an entire chapter to the Process and the alleged Manson connections, calling the Process “an English occult society dedicated to observing and aiding the end of the world by stirring up murder, violence and chaos, and dedicated to the proposition that they, the Process, shall survive the gore as the chosen people”; the “black-caped, black-garbed, death-worshiping Process Church”; “hooded snuffoids,” and “yet another sleazo-input that warped the mind of Charles Manson.”[129]

Sanders didn’t mince words and claimed outright that the Process was involved in human sacrifice, blood drinking, sex orgies and drugs. Sanders also attempted to link the Process to an occult group known as the Ordo Templi Orientis (Aleister Crowley’s famous occult order) and to a series of alleged animal mutilations and ritual human sacrifices said to have taken place in California’s Santa Cruz mountains, claiming that those acts were committed by an alleged Process-splinter group called the “Four P Movement.” (Again, no source for this information is provided and we are left to simply take Sanders at his word).

As a result of all this, the Process filed a $1.5 million dollar libel suit against Sanders, and won, with the publishers settling with the Process out of court (*and* forced to issue an apology).[130]

Accordingly, there was a temporary hold on the publishing of *The Family*, but it is back on the market now, only minus the chapter on the

Process. Most recently, a third edition has been released, but any references to the Process are made as “an English Satanic society in the 1960’s.” (The first edition of Sanders’ book is a collector’s item these days).

Enter the Smoke Pumpers II: Maury Terry

But the Process myth is one that refuses to die quietly. The next attack on the group came from Maury Terry in his 1987 book *The Ultimate Evil*.

It would appear that Terry was all too willing to listen to unsubstantiated hearsay while conducting his research for his book and may have even invented some stuff of his own. After interviewing Ed Sanders, Terry decided that not only were the Process, Manson and the Ordo Templi Orientis linked, so were the Son of Sam murders.

In *The Ultimate Evil*, Terry attempts to paint a picture (with a very, very broad brush) of a super-secret, underground network of Satanic serial killers, rapists, drug dealers, child pornographers and “snuff film” makers running amok on the American landscape, including an “occult superstar” and “Satanic hit man” he calls “Manson II.”

Terry claims that a person he calls “Manson II” was brought in from Los Angeles to assist David Berkowitz (along with an alleged group of Satanic contract killers he calls “The Children”) in the commission of the 1977 “Son of Sam” murders in New York City. (This “Manson II” was later tentatively identified as “Phil Benson” and finally, as William Molony Mentzer, a Vietnam veteran and Los Angeles hit man who was convicted in 1990 for the 1983 murder of would-be movie producer Roy Radin. Mentzer is currently serving life without parole for the Radin murder and concurrent life sentences for both the murder of a prostitute and yet another attempted murder).

It has been strongly implied by Terry that Roy Radin was associated with “The Children,” an alleged Process-splinter group, who Terry claimed had committed murders all over the United States and that Radin was murdered by either “Manson II” or members of “The Children.” (Terry also claimed that Radin was in possession of a videotaped “snuff film” he had purchased from the group that showed the murder of one of the Son of Sam victims, a notion that is discussed further below).

However, the facts that emerged at Mentzer’s trial, and in his subsequent appeal, show that Radin was actually murdered in relation to a movie deal gone bad and as revenge for the theft of ten kilos of cocaine and a large sum of money from a woman named Karen DeLayne Greenberger.

Greenberger was one of the murder defendants at the Mentzer trial and the person who hired Mentzer and two others (Alex Lomota Marti and Robert Ulmer Lowe) to kill Radin. Radin was involved in the entertainment business in New York and was interested in producing the movie *The Cotton Club*. In 1983, Radin met Greenberger in Los Angeles. Greenberger, a cocaine dealer, expressed an interest in helping to produce *The Cotton Club* and introduced Radin to a Hollywood film producer for which she expected to be paid $50,000 as a referral fee. Evidence presented at the murder trial and in the appellate documents showed that the murder of Radin, quite horrible in nature, arose out of the botched deal for the movie and the drug and money burn. (Evidence was also presented that pointed to the fact that there may have even been a *racial* motivation for the murder, as Radin was Jewish and one of the killers had expressed a hatred for Jews).

And as far as Terry's assertions that Mentzer was some sort of "occult superstar" who was deeply involved in Satanic ritual murder, one may take note that not a single shred of evidence pointing to that notion was ever uncovered by law enforcement officials that would verify Terry's claim; at no time at Mentzer's murder trial or in his subsequent legal appeal is any mention ever made by the judges, prosecutors or investigators of Charles Manson, the Process, "Manson II," "The Children," or any aspect of the Son of Sam murders.[131]

It is more likely that Mentzer's alleged "connection" to the Son of Sam murders stems from a rumor that he knew both Abigail Folger (one of the Tate-LaBianca murder victims) and supposedly, Charles Manson himself, hence the moniker, "Manson II."

And while those claims have been given a lot of mileage by other researchers looking for any sort of smoking gun or link that will lend weight to the Manson/Son of Sam/Process "connections," it is important to note that Mentzer is well-known for having made many fantastic assertions in the past, among which is his claim to have met the Zodiac killer (whom he described as a 240 pound black man) while incarcerated in a California prison.

Terry also implies that "Manson II" was responsible for the 1974 death of Arlis Perry. Perry, a college student and evangelical Christian, was found murdered in what Terry describes as a "ritualistic" fashion in a church on the Stanford University campus in California. In reality, the Perry murder, while still unsolved, has never been conclusively linked by any source *other than Maury Terry* to the Son of Sam murders. Most likely, the Perry murder was the tragic result of a horrifyingly violent, but all too ordinary sex crime and the investigating officers (the Santa Clara

Sheriff's Department) rightly focused their search for a local sexual psychopath.[132]

Also in *The Ultimate Evil*, Terry (like Ed Sanders before him) demonstrates his almost complete lack of knowledge and understanding of the occult. And like Ed Sanders' crusade to clear the hippie name by showing that it was occultism that should be blamed for the Manson family murders, Maury Terry attempts to pin almost every known vile human impulse on groups that engage in what he deems to be "occult" practices, a term that, as evidenced by his own words, he applies very loosely and liberally.

Central to Terry's claim of a connection between the Process and the Son of Sam murders is his allegation that the Process splintered and went underground to form a bloodthirsty group of gore gangsters, a charge for which he offers no credible substantiation or where the evidence proffered is simply too absurd to be believable. (His "evidence" was seemingly interpreted, molded and influenced by his desire to make a case at any cost in order to sell his book).

For example, he unearths the old "Satanic animal mutilation" rumor again simply because some dead German Shepard dogs were found in Untermyer Park (located in the New York City neighborhood of Yonkers and the supposed meeting place of "The Children") and where heavy metal/stoner-type graffiti, such as pentagrams and inverted crosses, had been spray-painted on walls. However, it should be noted that this type of vandalism was all-too common during the late 1980's and early 1990's, a period that marked the pinnacle of the heavy metal music scene. During that time, spray-painted "Satanic" graffiti was a common sight in many towns all across America (including my own and probably in yours, too. In fact, I could have taken you to view similar graffiti in several areas right in my own neighborhood. In most cases, such graffiti is the work of bored teenagers who are into "black metal" or gothic-type music, and as such, should never be used to make overly-sinister connections to murder).

For Terry, as in the preceding example, the most mundane things became overtly "Satanic," such as people wearing black leather bondage gear, the fact that in one of the Son of Sam letters sent to the police, the word "honor" was spelled "honour," the way the British spell it. (Get it? British spelling equal English Satanic society, bingo!). Such unprofessional and conspiratorial leaps in logic by Terry are numerous and almost the standard throughout his book.

Regarding Terry's claims linking the Ordo Templi Orientis (O.T.O.) to the Manson/Son of Sam/Process "conspiracy," he apparently derived that theory in part from some rather flimsy evidence that Manson

was at one time involved with the Solar Lodge of the O.T.O., which during the 1960's was headed by a woman named Jean Brayton of California, along with her husband Richard Brayton, a philosophy professor at the University of Southern California.

Terry either didn't know, or didn't care that this particular O.T.O. lodge was considered to be a renegade group and not officially sanctioned by any legitimate branch of the real Ordo Templi Orientis (meaning that this group had no blessing from the official O.T.O. hierarchy). The Solar Lodge, located in the Colorado desert, was formed in the early 1960's and was active before, during, and after the Manson murders.

The history of the Solar Lodge shows that it certainly could not be considered to be free from controversy or to have been benevolent towards its own membership. Drug use, ritual magic and the absolute control of the lives of its lodge members by the Brayton's was the standard practice, including going so far as to control their sex lives and completely take away parental control of member's children.

But the darkest rumor leveled at the Solar Lodge involved the alleged murder of a member who had supposedly crossed the group in some way, a tale that includes burying his body in the desert ala the Manson family.

In late summer of 1969, a visitor to the lodge reported that a child whom Jean Brayton had punished was being held captive inside of a small crate in the searing desert heat (a case that would later come to be referred to as the "Boy in the Box" incident by the news media). As a result, several Solar Lodge members were charged with felony child abuse and the body of a lodge member who had died of a drug overdose was discovered buried nearby. The Brayton's had fled to Mexico to avoid the police raid, but eventually surrendered to the FBI. Upon being questioned by the FBI, the Brayton's denied any involvement or association with the Manson family.[133]

As with the Process and Ed Sanders, a California branch of the O.T.O. filed a lawsuit against Terry and his publishers for defamation, which Terry lost. The *New York Law Journal* for June 24, 1988, reported on the case, noting that:

> "Defendants, publisher and author of a book expounding the theory that a nationwide Satanic "cult" is responsible for numerous notorious murders in recent times, were sued for defamation by an organization the author alleged was part of the Satanic network. The court refused to dismiss the action, finding that the allegations

> in the book, reiterated by the author in two television interviews, gave rise to a cause of action if plaintiff could substantiate the facts averred in its complaint."[134]

Appealing all the way to the Supreme Court, the case was subsequently settled out of court in the O.T.O.'s favor with a cash settlement for an undisclosed amount and an agreement that all references to the O.T.O. would be excluded from future editions of *The Ultimate Evil*.

But perhaps most laughable of all is Terry's portrayal of Robert DeGrimston as some sort of elusive and shadowy occult thug who virtually unleashed a Satanic poison upon the earth. In an essay called *The Process: A Personal Reminiscence* written by R.N. Taylor, the author noted how he discovered that Robert DeGrimston was living near a major American city, was listed in the white pages of the telephone book, and that DeGrimston was easily reached for an interview by simply picking up the telephone and calling him. (In that interview, DeGrimston denounced the sensationalism and characterized the negative portrayals of the Process as "unbearable" and "a pack of lies").[135]

What that proves is that sometimes the best approach in cases like this is just to go straight to the source. Indeed, my own interviews with former and current members of the Process yielded much valuable information about the group that one cannot find in books or by simply listening to hearsay. One is left wondering how any conscientious investigator seeking the truth about the Process (as Terry leads us to believe he is) could have dropped the ball so badly on this one.

Another persistent rumor that Terry has helped along its way and/or which he may have even created from whole cloth, concerns the allegation that one of the Son of Sam murders was filmed, specifically, the murder of Stacy Moskowitz, Son of Sam's last known victim.

It is Terry's contention that the alleged "snuff film" was shot by drug dealer/pornographer/photographer Ronald Sisman, who supposedly filmed the murder from a Volkswagen van parked near the victims, allegedly for movie financier and porn collector Roy Radin. However, there has never been any real evidence presented to back up this claim beyond information given to him by prison snitches and Terry's own asserted belief that it is in fact true. (A "snuff film" is, of course, a choreographed movie in which someone is intentionally murdered for the benefit of the camera; rumor holds that the term was originally coined by none other than Ed Sanders).

The origin and history of alleged snuff films is an interesting one. In an article called *Classic Snuff Films*, author Rider McDowell writes:

> According to LAPD Vice Squad Sergeant Don Smith, snuff films got their name during the 1969 investigation of the Tate-LaBianca murders in Los Angeles . . . The present-day connotation, the idea of filming an unsuspecting actress's murder with the intent to distribute the film commercially, that was added later. Also known as "white heat" films and "the real thing," the snuff film myth lives on like Bigfoot, despite the fact that no law enforcement agency in America has publicly admitted to ever locating one . . . This sentiment is echoed by Ken Lanning, a cult expert at the FBI training academy at Quantico, Virginia. "I've not found one single documented case of a snuff film anywhere in the world. I've been searching for 20 years, talked to hundreds of people. There's plenty of once-removed sightings, but I've never found a credible personality who personally saw one." Yet the rumor of snuff persists . . . One of the most resilient snuff rumors concerns convicted "Son of Sam" killer David Berkowitz, who allegedly filmed the murders of some of his victims. Maury Terry, author of *The Ultimate Evil*, a book about Berkowitz and cult killings across America, tells me, "Its believed Berkowitz filmed his murders to circulate within the Church of Satan. On the night of the Stacy Moskowitz killing, there was a VW van parked across the street from the murder site under a bright sodium street lamp. Witnesses have confirmed this, although the van never appeared in the police report. Berkowitz or an accomplice filmed Moskowitz's murder, using the street lamp to light the subject as she sat in her car across the street." Terry says the film was apparently made for Roy Radin, the Long Island impresario and "wanna-be Cotton Club financier." "Radin was known for his huge porno collection and wanted to add a snuff film to it. I've heard there are ten copies of this film floating around, although I've never seen it."[136]

As noted earlier, Terry also alleges that Sisman was later murdered by "The Children" because of his involvement with the filming of a Son of Sam snuff film. (Sisman and a woman named Elizabeth Plotzman were found murdered execution-style in Sisman's apartment on or near Halloween 1981. While Terry suspects that evil Satanists sent to retrieve a snuff film were the culprits, New York police believed that the murders were linked to Sisman's involvement in small-time drug trafficking, as he was known to have sold drugs on the side to supplement his income as a porn photographer).[137]

But to give Maury Terry a bit of a break, he does explore a rather interesting theory in his book that Berkowitz may have not acted alone and that he might have actually had accomplices during that particular New York murder spree, believable enough for authorities to attempt to reopen the case in 1996.

Specifically, Terry theorizes that the Carr brothers, Michael and John, may have also been Son of Sam shooters, acting in collusion with Berkowitz. The murder of Stacy Moskowitz, a twenty-year old Son of Sam victim who was shot and killed in 1977 and in which the shooter also partially blinded her date, Robert Violante, has provided many excellent witnesses and some of the most compelling evidence for multiple perpetrators in the Son of Sam case.

A thorough investigation into this claim was the basis for a segment featured on the *Unsolved Mysteries* television show about the Son of Sam murders. That episode closely examined the Moskowitz shooting with detailed maps and a timeline provided by witnesses. According to one eyewitness, Berkowitz was not in close proximity to the site of the Moskowitz shooting at the time it occurred and *Unsolved Mysteries* theorized that he may have instead been acting as a lookout that night for another shooter.

Anyone who has studied the numerous police composite drawings of the Son of Sam suspects will agree that both John and Michael Carr *do* seem to resemble several of the Son of Sam shooters as described by witnesses (in fact, the Carr brothers resemble *most* of the composites, while Berkowitz only resembles two of them; witness descriptions of the shooters varied widely, as did descriptions of the vehicles used by the gunmen).

Terry also explores the theory that John Carr may have written several of the Son of Sam letters, in particular, the infamous “Borrelli” and “Breslin” letters, which allegedly matches the known writing style and penmanship abilities of John Carr. The Breslin letter (May 30,1977 Son of Sam letter sent to New York Daily News columnist Jimmy Breslin) made reference to a known John Carr nickname, “Wheaties,” with the inclusion of the line “John ‘Wheaties,’ Rapist and Suffocater of Young Girls.” Within the Borrelli letter (April 17,1977 Son of Sam letter to Queens Detective Captain Joseph Borrelli) there are intimate details about Sam Carr (the Carr brothers’ father), his health, and habits and it appears that whoever wrote the letters seemed to know fine points about the elder Carr’s personal life. And Sam Carr (who was the same neighbor that owned the infamous barking dog that Berkowitz initially claimed to have received orders to commit murder from) was obviously the most logical inspiration for the name “Son of Sam,” if we accept the

Carr brothers-as-shooters hypothesis, as they were both quite literally, the “Sons of Sam.” (The *Unsolved Mysteries* investigation cited above and other evidence suggests the theory that the shooter in the Moskowitz murder may have actually been John Carr).

"Son of Sam" symbol drawn on letter sent to police

Former Queens district attorney John Santucci was quoted as saying, “I believe David Berkowitz did not act alone, that in fact others did cooperate, aid and abet him in the commission of these crimes.” (John Carr had allegedly been in Houston, Texas on June 12, 1976, the day Berkowitz is known to have purchased the .44 caliber revolver later used in the Son of Sam murders there. Six months after Berkowitz was captured, John Carr allegedly committed suicide by shooting himself in the head with a rifle in Minot, North Dakota. John Carr’s suicide occurred under such mysterious circumstances that police have looked into his death as a possible murder.

Michael Carr died in New York City on October 4, 1979, after crashing his car into a street lamp at 75 miles per hour. An autopsy found that Carr had a high blood-alcohol level, in spite of an alleged religious aversion to alcohol. (Michael Carr was a Scientologist). Following his death, the Son of Sam case was officially reopened.[138]

However, notwithstanding the preceding concessions, three shooters would not a “global conspiracy” make and Terry’s attempts at showing that the Son of Sam murders were part of a large criminal network of Satanic terrorists is not backed up by one shred of credible evidence beyond his own personal beliefs, unsubstantiated rumors and third-person hearsay. (And let me offer just one last thought concerning the “Carr brothers as Son of Sam shooters” theory: as intriguing as that notion is, it remains my opinion that no substantive investigative work -- independent of the aforementioned *Unsolved Mysteries* segment -- has ever been undertaken in that regard. As such, I would love to see someone with the time, energy, and financial ability undertake an unbiased and truly objective investigation into that area of the Son of Sam case. As it stands right now, the unfounded allegations of “occult connections” leveled at groups such as the Process Church and the Manson family have, in my opinion, significantly damaged this area of the case, perhaps even beyond rescue).

But you can’t keep a good Satanic rumor down! Maury Terry was soon back again with the same old song and dance, claiming in a *Gear Magazine* article that there were three factors that influenced a “rush to judgment” to convict Berkowitz as the sole killer: a) political pressure from mayor Ed Beame who was trailing in the polls and who

badly wanted reelection; b) an "abominable cult that controlled Berkowitz and maintained connections in high places"; and c) a police force so bent on protecting the city's image that they ignored evidence that pointed to the involvement of others via a cover-up.

Terry has maintained contact with Berkowitz and it is quite apparent that he is still convinced that the "global Satanic cult conspiracy" exists. In his *Gear Magazine* article he writes:

> "His claims (Berkowitz's) are backed by a considerable volume of evidence and a new analysis by the Special Investigations Division of the Yonkers Police Department, which quietly opened an inquiry of the case two years ago. Its aims: to determine if Berkowitz was immersed in a plot hatched in that city's jurisdiction, to learn if any other related killings occurred, and to discover if the alleged group was still active locally."

But once again, we are not offered one shred of real evidence beyond Terry's and Berkowitz's own assertions (a most biased and dubious source at best) that such evidence exists, while Terry leads us to believe that this is because the information is supposedly being withheld from the public by police investigators.

According to Terry, he has learned from "official sources" (unnamed) that "the inquiry identified members of a 'British-originated Satanic cult,' 'the Process Church of the Final Judgment'" (here we go again!) as top suspects in the "Son of Sam cult conspiracy" and that the Yonkers Police have recommended that the Westchester County DA's office investigate with an eye towards convening a grand jury. Terry also states that at least five individuals "realizing that the net is closing in," have retained lawyers and begun seeking immunity and that a wealthy business man named "Moloch," now deceased, was the leader of the group responsible for the Son of Sam killings.

Terry goes on further to say that the Process moved from its New York headquarters at the end of the Son of Sam murders and relocated to Atlanta, Georgia, and suggests a link to the Atlanta child murders![139]

I feel compelled at this juncture to ask a few of the most obvious questions: How, in an age where we are beset by an instant media that can uncover even the smallest details of the private lives of our most prominent citizens and publish this information on an almost minute to minute basis, could a vast conspiracy to commit murder as alleged by Terry and others, last for so long without the whole case being blown wide open on the national news and the supposed "cult members" identified, arrested, and sent to prison? Why would a group that was

supposedly funded by rich benefactors and which allegedly wielded such major political influence waste its time by having a pathetic loser like David Berkowitz murder couples parked in lover's lanes in New York? Why do Terry's sources for his information -- like Ed Sanders before him -- always seem to be held in secret? (It should be noted that outside of naming individuals in the "Acknowledgments" section of *The Ultimate Evil*, Maury Terry provided no footnotes, endnotes, or cited source material for the majority of his information).

In an episode of the program *A&E Biography* that focused on the life of David Berkowitz, former FBI agent John Douglas, a criminologist who was instrumental in developing and perfecting the science of criminal profiling, discusses how he interviewed and studied Berkowitz while perfecting his theories about the criminal mind. While speaking on camera about Berkowitz for *A&E*, Douglas stated unequivocally that he believed that the Son of Sam/Satanic cult theory was simply a lie with absolutely no basis in fact and that Berkowitz was a classic psychopath who could not be believed. That same episode of *Biography* showed quite convincingly how Berkowitz was actually motivated by an intense hatred for his birth mother whom he viewed as being immoral for having conceived him out of wedlock and then "abandoning" him to his adoptive parents. Subsequently, Berkowitz' hatred for "loose women" would lead him to seek out and kill young girls he caught necking in lover's lanes.[140]

Unfortunately, and perhaps not so surprisingly, David Berkowitz has now adopted Maury Terry's "global Satanic cult theory" as his own and now claims that he didn't take part in most of the shootings attributed to him (which as I noted above, is an interesting theory, but one that has never been fully explored or corroborated).

A 1996 *A&E* program, *Investigative Reports: Son of Sam Speaks: The Untold Story* features Berkowitz speaking about his crimes and in which he (and the show's producers) gives an almost verbatim rehash of Terry's "global Satanic cult" story. Berkowitz, while being interviewed on camera, spoke of the activities of a "cult," and how it was "focused on the upcoming millennium, when they believe violence and chaos will trigger the end of the world."[141]

In this same video, Berkowitz also talks about how two gunmen were brought to New York specifically for the Son of Sam rampage, but never reveals specific details of their activities and/or tangible evidence to back up his story. This is most likely because close scrutiny of these facts by law enforcement would certainly dispel the Satanic cult theory Berkowitz is so desperately clinging to in hopes of perhaps improving his future chances with a parole board. (Again, as noted above, I personally believe that multiple shooters may be an actual possibility and one that deserves to be investigated further. But I also tend to believe that any

two additional gunmen, which circumstantial evidence seems to indicate, may have been John and Michael Carr, would have already *been* in New York).

It becomes obvious to the objective viewer of this video that Berkowitz is being extremely evasive regarding specific questions put to him and is basically winging it through some of the tougher parts of the *A&E* interview. He never names any names when he has the chance to and after more than twenty years behind bars, his religious conversion and the real possibility that he will never again be a free man, why should he have any qualms about doing so?

In this author's letter correspondence with Berkowitz, I have found that it is now almost impossible to get anything even remotely close to the truth about his possible accomplices that does not include the Satanic cult angle. Berkowitz was extremely hard to work with as he insisted on discussing things with me only through a nearly impenetrable and exasperating veneer that includes a repeat of Maury Terry's Satanic cult theories, his own ultra-fundamentalist Christian beliefs, his new persona as "The Son of Hope" and seemingly as if I and everyone else is a potential member of his future parole board. (I corresponded with Berkowitz in 1998 and 1999 and pretty much reached the conclusion that Terry and Berkowitz seemed to have fed off each other's stories to the extent they both became totally immersed in the same spurious fantasy. It also became quite obvious to me that Berkowitz knows almost nothing about the "occult" as he claims and that he is in fact a liar of the first order).[142]

Conclusions Anyone?

As we have seen, there are some individuals for whom the Process Church of the Final Judgment serves as the foundation for evidence of a global conspiracy involving Satanic occultists. These same people, when interviewed, hint darkly that the evidence of the existence of this conspiracy is out there, but that it is being withheld to protect certain people. But the truth of the matter is, there is absolutely no evidence then or now that the Process Church of the Final Judgment or any of its alleged offshoots were ever involved in *any* illegal activity, nor is there any evidence that the Process was inherently violent.

By far, the most rational and objective study of the Process is *Satan's Power* by William Sims Bainbridge (and the primary source for which my history of the Process Church leans heavily on). Dr. Bainbridge was an assistant professor of sociology at the University of Washington who studied and lived with the Process for three years before, during and after the Manson murders. He admits that the Process enjoyed projecting a wild and even sinister image, but denies

that the group was ever involved in any organized violence or excessive anti-social behavior. Critics of Dr. Bainbridge have argued that he purposely whitewashed the group's image in his book *because he was one of them!*

As the song says, paranoia indeed strikes deep.

So what are my own conclusions at this point? I personally believe that Charles Manson *did* borrow heavily from the Process in forming his own philosophy. His residence in Haight-Ashbury during the Process' stay there was in very close proximity to the group. In my opinion, Manson's curiosity could have drawn him to some of their meetings, which were always open to the public and at the very least, he probably would have had access to Process literature. Another important fact to consider is that Manson studied Scientology in great depth and the Process based much of their own beliefs on the same principles and methods in which Scientology is grounded. As such, it is no great revelation to note that both Manson's and the Process' philosophies are similar.

But as Manson prosecutor Vincent Bugliosi has noted, there are a number of interesting parallels between Manson's and the Process Church's philosophy. Here is his list, with a few additions of my own:

• Both believed that a violent Armageddon was imminent that would destroy all but 144,000 of the "chosen people." The Process called this "The Final Judgment"; Manson called it "Judgment Day" or "Helter Skelter."

• Both found their basis for this belief in the Christian Bible's *Book of Revelation*.

• Both envisioned that motorcycle gangs would be the shock troops in the world's last days and both sought to recruit them into their folds.

• Both Manson and the Process referred to their groups as "The Family."

• Both acquired the roots of their philosophies from Scientology; the Process, as discussed earlier, was basically a splinter group from the Scientology movement in London; Manson studied Scientology and other occult systems extensively while in prison. Much of the jargon and catch phrases used by both groups came from or had roots in Scientology terminology (examples of this include Manson's use of the Scientology expressions, "cease to exist," and "coming to Now").

• Both held animals in high, almost worshipful, regard.

• Both believed that they could recognize the “Seal of God” in the foreheads of their followers; in Manson’s case, he and his followers carved X’s into their foreheads, which were later altered into swastikas.

• Both sought to live communally in extremely isolated parts of the world; the Process at Xtul, Mexico; the Manson Family in Death Valley, California.

• Both preached of the unity of Christ and Satan.

• Both used a swastika-like symbol.

• Both changed the names of their followers.

• Manson talked often of the “bottomless pit”; Process literature spoke of the “bottomless void.”

• Both Manson and DeGrimston believed themselves to be reincarnations of Jesus Christ.

• According to Bugliosi, both Manson and The Process “hoped to use the Negro as a whole to start some militant thing,” a statement (which by Bugliosi’s own admission came from a disgruntled former Process member) that suggests a Process link to Manson’s alleged obsession with “Helter Skelter,” an event that would supposedly ignite a black-white race war in America.[143]

What all of the above shows is that there is good *circumstantial evidence*, in part, that demonstrates a Manson/Process “connection,” but it should be kept in mind that those associations exist primarily in the *philosophies* of the two. It is my contention that there are no similarities in their respective *modus operandi* or in what each hoped to achieve as the ultimate end product of applying those philosophies. (And I hope that I have demonstrated clearly enough that Manson distorted the Process’ beliefs in such a manner so as to suit his own particular needs and that it is at that juncture that the two part ways).

The legal definition of circumstantial evidence, which I rely on while making my case here, makes it clear that it is *not* the same as *direct evidence* from a witness who *saw or heard something*, but rather, consists of *reasonable facts that can be used to infer other facts*. (Examples of circumstantial evidence include fingerprints or DNA found at a crime scene). While circumstantial evidence is generally admissible in a court of law, it can be excluded when the connection between the fact and the inference being made in regard to its existence is too weak to be of any help in deciding the outcome of a case or where the inferences are so *extraordinary, unreasonable, or improbable* that it

would require the suspension of normal logic in order to support a conclusion. It is my contention that the latter circumstance holds true as far as the Manson/Son of Sam/Process "connections" are concerned.

So regardless of how you look at it, the mere *existence* of circumstantial evidence does not entitle *anyone* to make the huge leaps in logic that have been made in this case. It is only the most paranoid or those with a predisposed agenda who have the greatest need to infer that the existing circumstantial evidence in this case points toward a world-wide Satanic conspiracy hell-bent on murder, rape, and every kind of horror imaginable.

I would like to point out that my reasons for wanting to debunk these fantastic claims does not stem from any huge admiration on my part for the Process Church. While I do see a lot in their core philosophy that I agree with, including much intelligence, poetry, and intriguing metaphysical concepts, it is my personal opinion that the foundation for the Process' beliefs are based on concepts that I have a fundamental spiritual and philosophical disagreement with. And I have never been able to take too seriously any group that was convinced that the end of the world was at hand.

Rather, I wanted to take away part of the ammunition and a major propaganda tool from those self-styled "occult experts" and wild-eyed conspiracy researchers who constantly drag out the Process in support of their "global Satanic cult" conspiracy theories. My true quest in this narrative has been to perform as much of a microscopic examination of the allegations that the Process, Manson, and the Son of Sam are linked in acts of Satanic mayhem that was within my means and power to perform *and* without a starting point that included any preconceived theories that I had no evidence for. Accordingly, my conclusions follow from the facts and not the other way around. I have even been called a "Process apologist" in the past by a few conspiracy theorists who do not like the fact that the basis for their paranoid beliefs about dangerous "Satanic" cults goes right down the drain in the wake of my demythologization of the Process Church. But if you must apply a label to my ideas, then just call me a "Process *realist*." Because my research into the Process' background and history not only serves to debunk the rumors that they were a blood-thirsty Satanic cult out to destroy the world, but actually proved to me personally that the *exact opposite* about the group is true! Anyone who cares to dig deep enough will discover, as I did, that the Process was in fact quite caring and benevolent in nature, having (for the most part) the best interest in mind for its membership and that they were very active in serving their local community. The latter was done by providing free social services to the public, such as programs to feed and clothe the homeless, volunteering for hospital work, and working with senior citizens. None of the

conspiracy theorists like to talk about or even acknowledge those sorts of things.

But that sort of behavior is nothing new. There is also a tendency among people who have virtually no training or expertise in the occult sciences to lump all slightly unusual religions and practices together from a liberal use of the term “Satanism.” In a 1989 report he prepared for the F.B.I., Special Agent Kenneth Lanning writes:

> “The words Satanic, occult, and ritualistic are often used interchangeably. It is difficult to precisely define Satanism (with a capital S) and no attempt will be made to do so here. However, it is important to realize how the word Satanism (with a small “s”) is used by many people. Simply put, for some people, Satanism is any religious belief system other than their own; the Ayatollah Khomeini referred to the United States as the “Great Satan.” In the British Parliament, a Protestant leader called the Pope the Antichrist. In a book titled *Prepare For War*, the author Rebecca Brown, M.D., has a chapter titled *Is Roman Catholicism Witchcraft?* Dr. Brown also lists among the “doorways” to Satanic power and/or demon infestation the following: fortune tellers, horoscopes, fraternity oaths, vegetarianism, yoga, self-hypnosis, relaxation tapes, acupuncture, biofeedback, fantasy role-playing games, adultery, homosexuality, pornography, judo, karate, and rock music. Dr. Brown states that rock music “was a carefully masterminded plan by none other than Satan himself.” The ideas expressed in this book may seem extreme and even humorous. This book, however, has been recommended as a serious reference in law enforcement training material on this topic.”[144]

It is important to understand that books such as Maury Terry’s were published during the apex of what has become known as the great “Satanic Panic” here in America and abroad, a period of literal “witch hunting” and bigoted religious intolerance that continues to this day. During that time, myself and many other occultists were actively engaged in combating the lies and false accusations leveled at members of “occult” or “Satanic” styled religions by members of the press and the fundamentalist Christian right. I can state unequivocally that, with very, very few exceptions, the majority of the “evidence” alleged to be of a “Satanic” nature was purposely misread by people with an axe to grind (usually members of evangelical and fundamentalist Christian sects), reporters looking for a story at any cost, and those who misinterpreted

the evidence because they simply did not understand what constitutes *actual* occultism.

By early 1974, Robert DeGrimston's ideas about how to run the church had become a liability in the eyes of other top members who felt he had failed badly in the public relations department and pressure was being placed on him to resign. In the end, DeGrimston was simply removed and Mary Ann assumed leadership. DeGrimston left the group, taking several loyal members with him and returning to England.

Mary Anne, now DeGrimston's estranged wife, stepped in as leader of the Process and she reorganized the group, giving it the name of "Foundation Church of the Millennium." She also completely changed the group's image, getting rid of the black clothes and occult references (focusing on Jehovah to the exclusion of all other Process gods) and adopting a theology that was virtually indistinguishable from any other form of mainstream Christianity.

Mary Anne later would found "The Best Friends Animal Society" in Kanab, Utah, a highly successful "no kill" sanctuary for animals that has become the model for other such pro-animal organizations. (Along with Mary Anne, many members of the Process were early pioneers in the ideas that would later evolve into the animal rights movement as we know it today).

In 2003, *Best Friends* reportedly raised an impressive $20 million toward the cause of saving unwanted pets from destruction. (*Best Friends* also publishes a popular pet owner's magazine bearing the same name).[145]

Interestingly, a recent *Rocky Mountain News* article revealed that a series of corporate records links *Best Friends* to the same 1967 incorporation of The Process Church during the group's sojourn in New Orleans.

In that article, *Best Friends* President Michael Mountain (formerly known as Process member Father Aaron) downplayed the image of the Process as "just a group of young people searching for spiritual truth in the crazy atmosphere of the late 1960's and early 1970's." Mountain was also quoted as saying that "the Satanic part of it all is a bad rap," noting that no one in The Process ever actually prayed to Satan. Mountain was also quoted as saying that he hopes *Best Friends*' openness about their past ties to the Process Church will dismiss all the rumors being spread by "conspiracy theorists," noting that one such vindictive person has been contacting *Best Friends* partners to inform them

Robert DeGrimston with another version of "Four P" symbol

of the group's history. (The same *Rocky Mountain News* article reports that *Best Friends* was incorporated as a nonprofit in 1993, that all religious language has been removed from the corporate papers, and that the staff is religiously diverse, including Christians, Jews and Buddhists).[146]

My research into the current status of the Process Church today revealed that there are/were several groups who are claiming to be reincarnations of the original Process movement, including one group known as "The Society of Processeans" whose web presence now seems to be defunct.

However, one website for the "Gnostic Liberation Front" hosts a web page for a Brother Thomas, a member of the Process who is attempting to reorganize the old membership and also return the group to its early core belief system. Under the banner headline "Calling All Former Processeans," and with the greeting, "As It Is, the Process Church of the Final Judgment is Coming Back!, So Be It," the site contains a few "testimonials" from original Process members and copies of virtually every Process text ever written. (The site also hosts many great full-color reproductions of some of the original Process magazines).[147]

In Brother Thomas' personal account on his website, he recalls how in 1973 he was given a copy of a Process magazine at a witchcraft store in New Haven, Connecticut. Seeing much that appealed to him in their literature, he traveled to New York City with "the ultimate intent of joining them" and states that he was disappointed when he discovered that the New York Process was none other than Mary Anne DeGrimston's new "Foundation Faith of the Millennium." Determined to locate the original Process Church, he placed an ad in the New York's alternative newspaper *The Village Voice* in 1979, in which he stated his desire to get into contact with former Process members who had not converted to the Foundation Faith, hoping instead to locate Processeans who had remained loyal to Robert DeGrimston and the original Process theology. (At the time of the initial publication of this work, Brother Thomas had succeeded in locating many former Processeans, including an original member named Brother Isaiah, with whom I was able to discuss many aspects of The Process religion. For the full text of that interview, see Appendix 1).

What I have also learned from my research is that the various groups now calling themselves "The Process" have beliefs that differ significantly from group to group. Unlike Brother Thomas' group, whose core philosophy is pantheistic and has never involved anything even remotely akin to "the dark arts" (as emphasized to me by Brother Isaiah), another version of the Process seems to be trying to continue to

"normalize" the Process' image by stating that their theology is based solidly in standard Christian beliefs, has nothing to do with "the occult," and focuses primarily on a singular belief in Jehovah. (They do, however, still hold the texts of Robert DeGrimston in high regard and considered those to be sacred and central to their philosophies).[148]

As for Robert DeGrimston himself, he apparently now earns a living as a business consultant for a telecommunications company in New York. On first hearing of that information, I wondered if that could really be the case as I thought that DeGrimston must surely be well past retirement age by now. However, a database search of New York consulting firms revealed that a "Robert DeGrimston" does indeed work for a consulting firm in that state. (And I might add yet again how all of the foregoing information tends to demonstrate perfectly that if DeGrimston was actually the leader of a bloodthirsty and criminal Satanic cult as claimed, he rather oddly has chosen to "hide" in plain sight while living what appears to be a perfectly normal life. Go figure).[149]

Robert DeGrimston, quite understandably, refuses to speak with reporters and writers these days, so I was not surprised when my own letter request to him for a personal interview went unheeded. One can only guess as to what his opinion of some of the more paranoid conspiracy theories that have grown up around the Process would be, but I suspect it would be along the lines of total disbelief and disgust.

Even today, "Satanic cult" hysteria still occasionally raises its ugly head: In 1992, a case of "Satanic panic" occurred in Gilmer, Texas, beginning with the mysterious disappearance of a teenager named Kelly Wilson. Shortly afterward, multiple members of the Kerr family of Gilmer, Texas were arrested on charges that included child molestation, kidnapping, "Satanic ritual abuse," torture, cannibalism and murder. All of the charges were based primarily on the forced testimony of a six-year old boy who claimed that the Kerr's were members of a "Satanic cult" who had, among many other detailed and graphic horrors, allegedly raped, tortured, and ritually murdered Kelly Wilson in a Satanic ceremony in the woods. The case turned the entire town into a battleground as suspicious neighbors began to accuse each other of being members of a Satanic cult. Eventually, even one of the town's top police officers assigned to investigate the case would be accused of being a member of the Satanic cult and indicted for murder. A special prosecutor was appointed, aided by a team that included two fundamentalist Christian "occult crime experts" and two social workers, one whom was a true believer in "Satanic ritual abuse." Charges were eventually dismissed against all of the suspects at the request of the Texas State Attorney General's office after that office reached the conclusion that the case had been irreparably damaged by overzealous investigators who were bent

on proving that a “Satanic cult” was operating in the area. The disappearance of Kelly Wilson remains unsolved.[150]

In 2004, a Chicago woman -- whose identity has been protected by use of the pseudonym “Elizabeth Gale”-- won $7.35 million, the largest malpractice settlement ever awarded to a single person, for being placed into drug-induced hypnosis and then convinced by her psychiatrist, psychologist and therapists that she had been a “breeder” whose babies were used in ritual sacrifice by a Satanic cult. Hospitalized over eighteen times in the course of twelve years, Ms. Gale allegedly underwent a tubal ligation in order to prevent any more “cult pregnancies,” a procedure that she said was performed with her doctor’s approval. A judge approved the settlement in the lawsuit against her psychiatrist, two of his colleagues and two Chicago area hospitals. (One of her psychiatrists had previously had his medical license temporarily suspended in 1999 after a different woman had made similar accusations against him regarding his having convinced her that she also had been a member of a Satanic cult).[151]

As for Maury Terry, he simply refuses to stop flogging the dead horse: three hours of the April 15, 2004 *A Closer Look* radio show, hosted by Michael Corbin, focused on a discussion of the Process Church, including the latest revelations concerning the Best Friends Animal Society’s known ties to the group, and Terry’s unflagging belief in the “global Satanic cult conspiracy.” That edition of the *A Closer Look* show devoted a full two hours to an interview with Terry in which he demonstrated that he is still furiously banging away on the Process/Manson/Berkowitz-Satanic-murder-conspiracy drum, along with hinting heavily to listeners that the *Best Friends Animal Society* is *possibly* a front for a new, “undercover” version of the evil, murderous Process Church! (His accusations were along the lines of saying that *Best Friends*, while bringing in homeless kittens and puppies through the front door, is probably taking them out the back one to sacrifice them to Satan. But in what appeared to be Terry’s recollection of lawsuits gone by, he was quite careful to use the word “allegedly” when discussing his accusations of “Satanic murder” and other crimes involving *Best Friends*). The depth that Terry’s conspiratorial reasoning goes to in that radio interview is an absolutely amazing thing to experience. He basically states that *everyone*, from important politicians to writers such as yours truly, are all involved in a grand conspiracy to keep the “truth” about the “evil” Process Church from coming to light and anyone who tries to say anything different is, well, *part of the conspiracy*! (And for your information, Terry also repeatedly warned about possible encounters one may have with “Process apologists” found both in books and on the Internet).[152]

During the course of my research into the *Best Friends* angle of this story, I corresponded regularly with Barbara Williamson, the media relations manager for *Best Friends Animal Society*. Not only was she quite friendly and open while answering my many questions, but she also extended an invitation to me for a personal visit to the *Best Friends* compound in order to take a tour of the grounds and meet with Michael Mountain personally. With real regret, I had to decline that generous offer as other commitments would not allow me to travel at that time, but I was able to interview Michael Mountain by telephone. (See Appendix 2, *Interview with Michael Mountain of Best Friends Animal Society*). Overall, I was impressed by the group's openness and willingness to accommodate my request for information. (And I suppose that it might not have mattered much to the truly paranoid if I *had* actually visited the *Best Friends* sanctuary and reported that nothing was amiss as they would probably just argue that the "evil Satanists" had simply hidden all of the black robes, ritual daggers, sacrificed animals and virgins from my sight while I was there). My personal experiences with *Best Friends* have convinced me that they, like the original Process Church before them, have simply fallen victim to the same ignorance and intolerance of a few paranoid fear-mongers and that they are innocent of any sort of sordid or unlawful activity.[153]

In closing, it is important to note that while the "Satanic panic" phenomenon seems to have died down since it's not-so-humble beginnings in the 1980's, many people still fervently and enthusiastically believe in the legends and fallacies pointed out above.

As such, it is not a matter of "if" all of this will resurface once again, but rather "when." You and I will be ready for them though.

About the Author

Curt Rowlett is a researcher and writer with a penchant for the mystical, mysterious, and macabre. His work has appeared in the books *Popular Paranoia*, *Labyrinth13: True Tales of the Occult, Crime & Conspiracy, The Curse of Palmyra Island*, *Riding On Your Fears*, and the magazines *Fortean Times*, *Strange Magazine*, *Paranoia*, and *Steamshovel Press*.

He is also: a serious student of the paranormal and the unexplained, a former merchant marine who has traveled all over the world, a rock musician, a retired criminal law paralegal, a licensed ham radio operator, and a genuine southern gentleman.

Footnotes

[1] On June 15, 2014, while reading through a Manson-related blog, I discovered a quote from an English artist named John Tottenham, who restates this observation in a similar, but more poetic manner: "Here was a unique confluence of circumstances - a crucible of chaos in which a bizarrely charismatic ex-con with a messianic complex attracted just the right group of vulnerable and manipulable young men and women on just the right/wrong combination of potent drugs in a climate that facilitated a horrific and previously unthinkable chain of events." See The Manson Family Blog at: http://www.mansonblog.com/2014/06/manson-relatet-art-exhibit-opens-today.html

[2] See *Will You Die for Me?: The Man Who Killed For Charles Manson Tells His Own Story*, by Tex Watson, as told to Chaplain Ray, Fleming H. Revell Company, Chapter 1, *Sure Charlie, You Can Kill Me*.

[3] In a nutshell, the rumor stated that Paul McCartney of the Beatles was decapitated in a car crash at 5:00 a.m. on Wednesday, November 9, 1966. Fans looking for clues to Paul's death found them in surplus on the group's album covers, in the fan booklets that came with albums, and even embedded in the band's music. While it is true that some of the "Paul is Dead" clues are simply too preposterous to accept, a few actually remain unexplained, both as genuine mysteries, and as examples of unusually strong coincidences that cannot be quite so easily dismissed. See the books, *Turn Me On, Dead Man: The Beatles and the "Paul Is Dead" Hoax*, by Andru J. Reeve, and *The Walrus Was Paul: The Great Beatle Death Clues*, by R. Gary Patterson.

[4] See *The Brotherhood of Eternal Love*, by Stewart Tendler and David May, Panther Books, Granada Publishing, 1984, p. 74 (of PDF version).

[5] See *My Life With Charles Manson*, by Paul Watkins with Guillermo Soledad, Bantam Books, 1979, *Part One: I Am You and You Are Me*, Chapter 1.

[6] See the documentary film *Manson*, by Robert Hendrickson and Laurence Merrick, 1973.

[7] See *My Life With Charles Manson*, by Paul Watkins with Guillermo Soledad, Bantam Books, 1979, Chapter 12.

[8] See *Charlie Don't Surf, But He's Got His Own Website!*, article by Richard Metzger.

[9] See *Apocalypse Now*, 1979, directed by Francis Ford Coppola. See also, *Heart of Darkness*, by Joseph Conrad, Hesperus Press, 2002.

[10] See *Apocalypse Now*, 1979, directed by Francis Ford Coppola.

[11] *Ibid.*

[12] *Ibid.*

[13] *Ibid*.

[14] See essay title, *The American Meaning of Charley Manson*, by David R. Williams.

[15] *Ibid*.

[16] *Ibid*.

[17] See *Apocalypse Now*, 1979, directed by Francis Ford Coppola.

[18] *Helter Skelter: The True Story of the Manson Murders*, by Vincent Bugliosi with Curt Gentry, Bantam Books, First edition, 1974, p. 641; see also, *Society and the Individual in Nietzsche's The Will to Power*, by Travis J. Denneson, *Section II*, *The Will to Power*. Denneson states, “A psychological presupposition of Nietzsche's is that humans are always attempting to inflict their wills upon others. Every action toward another individual stems from a deep-down desire to bring that person under one's power in one way or another. Whether a person is giving gifts, claiming to be in love with someone, giving someone praise, or physically harming someone, the psychological motive is the same: to exert one's will over others. This presupposition entails that all human beings are ultimately and exclusively egoistic by nature. Therefore, according to Nietzsche, there are no truly altruistic actions.”

[19] See the film, *Charles Manson Superstar*, by Nikolas Schreck.

[20] See *Helter Skelter: The True Story of the Manson Murders*, by Vincent Bugliosi with Curt Gentry, Bantam Books, First edition, 1974, p. 421.

[21] See *The Legion of Charlies*, 1st printing, 1971, *Last Gasp Eco-Funnies*, by Tom Veitch and Greg Irons.

[22] From correspondence between the author and Manson researcher and memorabilia collector, John Aes-Nihil.

[23] See essay titled, *An Introduction to the My Lai Courts-Martial*, by Doug Linder.

[24] See *Helter Skelter: The True Story of the Manson Murders*, by Vincent Bugliosi with Curt Gentry, Bantam Books, First edition, 1974, p. 438-442.

[25] See: *The My Lai Massacre: A Case Study*, by Major Tony Raimondo, JA, Human Rights Program, School of the Americas, Fort Benning, Georgia.

[26] From correspondence between the author and John Aes-Nihil.

[27] See *Charlie Don't Surf, But He's Got His Own Website!*; article by Richard Metzger.

[28] From Manson's 1988 interview with Geraldo Rivera.

[29] See *The Manson Files*, edited by Nikolas Schreck, Amok Press, 1988, p. 14.

[30] See *The Haight Ashbury: A History* by Charles Perry, 1st Edition, Random House, 1984, pp. 3-4, 125.

[31] See *A Season in Heaven: True Tales from the Road to Kathmandu*, by David Tomory, p. 115.

[32] See *LSD: My Problem Child; Reflections on Sacred Drugs, Mysticism, and Science*, by Albert Hoffman, Putnam Publishing, p. 14.

[33] *Ibid*, p. 15.

[34] See *The Psychedelic Experience: A Manual Based on the Tibetan Book of the Dead*, Citadel Press, 1995.

[35] See *The Psychedelic Experience: A Manual Based on The Tibetan Book of the Dead*, by Timothy Leary, Ralph Metzner and Richard Alpert, *First Bardo: The Period of Ego-loss or Non-game Ecstasy (Chikhai Bardo)*.

[36] See *The Haight Ashbury: A History*, by Charles Perry, 1st Edition, Random House, 1984, p. 7.

[37] *Ibid*, pp. 254-255.

[38] Definition supplied at: http://www.selfknowledge.com/109719.htm. “In Zen Buddhism, Nirvana is the realization of the true nature of the mind (consciousness), which is identical with the true nature of how human beings experience their world - the Buddha-nature . . . Nirvana frees one from suffering and fear of death. It is the highest, transcendent consciousness.”

[39] See *Will You Die for Me?: The Man Who Killed For Charles Manson Tells His Own Story*, by Tex Watson, as told to Chaplain Ray, Fleming H. Revell Company, Chapter 8, *Magical Mystery Tour*.

[40] See *Helter Skelter: The True Story of the Manson Murders*, by Vincent Bugliosi with Curt Gentry, Bantam Books, First edition, 1974, pp. 320-321.

[41] See *Storming Heaven; LSD and the American Dream*, by Jay Stevens, Grove Press; (October 1998), p. 347.

[42] For a full account of my research into this area, see my first book, *Labyrinth13: True Tales of the Occult, Crime & Conspiracy*, Chapter 11, *The Summer of Love Breeds a Season of Hate: The Effects of the Manson Murders*

on Public Perceptions of the Hippie Lifestyle.

[43] From Manson's 1988 interview with Geraldo Rivera.

[44] See *Labyrinth13: True Tales of the Occult, Crime & Conspiracy*, Chapter 10, *Charles Manson, Son of Sam and the Process Church of the Final Judgment: Exploring the Alleged Connections*.

[45] See *Labyrinth13: True Tales of the Occult, Crime & Conspiracy*, Chapter 12, *Project Mind Kontrol: Did the U.S. Government Actually Create Programmed Assassins?*

[46] See *Helter Skelter: The True Story of the Manson Murders*, by Vincent Bugliosi with Curt Gentry, Bantam Books, First edition, 1974, p281.

[47] *Ibid*, 1974, p. 25.

[48] See *First Homicide Investigation Progress Report, DR 69-059 593*, pp. 27-28.

[49] From pages 37-40 of a tape-recorded polygraph examination of William Eston Garretson, conducted on August 10, 1969.

[50] See message board for the *Official Tate-LaBianca Murders Blog*.

[51] See *Helter Skelter: The True Story of the Manson Murders*, by Vincent Bugliosi with Curt Gentry, Bantam Books, first edition, 1974, p. 30.

[52] *Ibid*, p. 49.

[53] *Ibid*, pp. 49-50.

[54] Excerpted from an interview conducted with William Garretson. See transcript of the show, *The Last Days of Sharon Tate*, *The E! True Hollywood Story*, original television broadcast, July 25, 1999.

[55] *Ibid*.

[56] *Ibid*.

[57] Paul Krassner was the editor of *The Realist* magazine and a key figure in the 1960s counterculture. He was also a founder of the Youth International Party (the Yippies) and a member of Ken Kesey's famous hippie band, the Merry Pranksters.

[58] See *Manson Family Movies*, written, directed and produced by John Aes-Nihil, 1984. (In order to hear the comment, one must have the director commentary activated on your DVD player).

[59] See *Movie stars, drug dealing, and the LAPD*, article by Paul Krassner, published August 9, 1999 in *Scope*.

[60] See *First Homicide Investigation Progress Report, DR 69-059 593*, p. 29.

[61] See *People v. Manson*, 61 CA3d 102, Court of Appeals of California, 2nd App. District, Div. One, Aug., 13, 1976; Footnote 41.

[62] See *Helter Skelter: The True Story of the Manson Murders*, by Vincent Bugliosi with Curt Gentry, Bantam Books, first edition, 1974, p. 576.

[63] See *Dream a Little Dream of Me: The Life of Cass Elliot*, by Eddi Fiegel, Chicago Review Press, 2007.

[64] See *Helter Skelter: The True Story of the Manson Murders*, by Vincent Bugliosi with Curt Gentry, Bantam Books, first edition, 1974, p. 642.

[65] *Ibid*, p. 642.

[66] See *Will You Die for Me?: The Man Who Killed For Charles Manson Tells His Own Story*, by Tex Watson, as told to Chaplain Ray, Fleming H. Revell Company, Chapter 1, *Sure Charlie, You Can Kill Me*.

[67] See *Dig at Barker Ranch for Manson Victims - Forensic Investigators Hope to Find Clues to Clandestine Graves*, Associated Press, March 23, 2008.

[68] See *Dig at Manson Ranch Ends; No Bodies Found*, Los Angeles Times, May 22, 2008.

[69] See also, *Helter Skelter: The True Story of the Manson Murders*, by Vincent Bugliosi with Curt Gentry, Bantam Books, First edition, 1974, p. 656.

[70] *Helter Skelter: The True Story of the Manson Murders* by Vincent Bugliosi with Curt Gentry, Bantam Books, first edition, 1974, page 297.

[71] *Squeaky: The Life and Times of Lynette Alice Fromme* by Jess Bravin, St. Martin's Press; (June 1997), page 107.

[72] *Squeaky: The Life and Times of Lynette Alice Fromme* by Jess Bravin, St. Martin's Press; (June 1997), page 112.

[73] *Helter Skelter: The True Story of the Manson Murders* by Vincent Bugliosi with Curt Gentry, Bantam Books, first edition, 1974, pp. 591-597.

[74] See *Life Magazine*, December 12, 1969; *The Love and Terror Cult*.

[75] *The Long Prison Journey of Leslie Van Houten: Life Beyond the Cult*, by Karlene Faith; Northeastern University Press; Chapter One; Getting Acquainted, p. 9.; see also *My Acid Trip with Groucho*, by Paul Krassner, *High Times* magazine, Feb 1981.

[76] See *John Linley Frazier, the Killer Prophet and Hippie Murderer*, Chapter 1, *The Year of the Hippie Murders*, by Katherine Ramsland archived at www.crimelibrary.com.

[77] See *Fatal Vision*, by Joe McGinniss, New American Library; Reissue edition (March 1999). See also, *Fatal Justice*: *Reinvestigating the MacDonald Murders*, by Jerry Allen Potter and Fred Bost, W.W. Norton & Company; Reprint edition (April 1997) in which the authors, after conducting a nine year investigation into MacDonald's claims of a hippie cult being responsible for the murders of his family, come to the conclusion that vital findings supporting MacDonald's version of events were never presented at his trial and that his story about a group of hippie murderers may have in fact, been true.

[78] See *Crimes and Punishment: The Illustrated Crime Encyclopedia*; H S Stuttman Co; September 1994; see also *Cannibalism: The Last Taboo* by Brian Marriner; Arrow Books 1992; see also *Minority Religions, Social Change, and Freedom of Conscience*; *The Satanic Bible: Quasi-Scripture/Counter-Scripture*; James R. Lewis (Department of Philosophy, University of Wisconsin at Stevens Point); from the 2002 CESNUR International Conference; Salt Lake City and Provo (Utah), June 20-23, 2002.

[79] See *Santa Cruz Sentinel* article titled, *The1970s; "Murder Capital of the World."*

[80] *The Die Song: A Journey into the Mind of a Mass Murderer* by Donald T. Lunde, Jefferson Morgan, W.W. Norton & Company; March 1980.

[81] *The Consumers Union Report on Licit and Illicit Drugs*, by Edward M. Brecher and the editors of *Consumer Reports* magazine, 1972.

[82] See *Snopes Urban Legend Reference Pages* at www.snopes.com. While doing research for this article, I discovered that there are a great many other myths associated with taking LSD, among them the belief that taking LSD seven times makes you legally insane (the estimated number of times varied depended on who was telling the tale, but it is usually some figure under ten; another variant on this same myth is that if you take LSD a certain number of times, you can't testify in court. Those particular rumors seem to have begun somewhere

between 1967 and 1975). In the book *Storming Heaven*, author Jay Stevens noted several LSD rumors that fed the general hysteria that began to crop up in the mid-60's, noting that: "Police departments around the country opened their own files to reporters eager to get a local angle on a breaking national story [regarding the abuse of LSD]. [T]here was the heavy user who, believing LSD had trans-mutated him into an orange, refused all human contact for fear of being turned into orange juice [*Author's note: possible urban legend*]. [There were many reports of LSD use] which verged on the weird rather than the horrible…like the time the LAPD found two guys sitting on a suburban lawn eating the grass and nibbling on tree bark. Or the time they received a complaint that a young man was standing beside the Coast Highway making obscene gestures at the traffic. When the police arrived, the guy dashed into the ocean, fell to his knees and began to pray, all the while yelling "I love you! I love you!" Then there was the time someone reported screams in a downtown apartment building and the police found a boy and girl having sex in the hall and shouting "God" and "Life" at the top of their lungs…reading the Los Angeles newspapers, one would have thought that scarcely a day passed that LSD didn't contribute to some calamity, usually involving teenagers. Yet police files show that in the first four months of 1966, out of 543 juveniles arrested for narcotics, only four involved LSD." Other urban myths about LSD includes the tales of liquid LSD being painted onto the numbered key pads in pay telephone booths where unsuspecting people would come into contact with the drug (urban legend); that LSD could be extracted from Foster's beer due to the "fact" that Foster's is made from ergot-containing grains, ergot being the wheat mold that is the precursor to making LSD (urban legend); the infamous belief that some LSD was contaminated with the poison strychnine (unproven), and that LSD damages your chromosomes (untrue, in fact, you can get more chromosomal damage from drinking a cup of coffee).

[83] *The Long Prison Journey of Leslie Van Houten: Life Beyond the Cult*, by Karlene Faith; Northeastern University Press; Chapter One; Getting Acquainted, p. 9.

[84] See *The Group Marriage Commune: A Case Study*, David E. Smith, M.D., Alan J. Rose, published in the *Journal of Psychedelic Drugs*, 3(1): 115-119, September 1970.

[85] *The Group Marriage Commune: A Case Study*, David E. Smith, M.D., Alan J. Rose, published in the *Journal of Psychedelic Drugs*, 3(1):115-119, September 1970.

[86] From *Entheogenic Sects and Psychedelic Religions* by R. Stuart; MAPS, Vol. XIII, Number 1, *Sex, Spirit, and Psychedelics*, 2002, p. 17; see also *Divine Smoke and God's Flesh: Psychedelics and Religion* by Peter Gorman*, Best of High Times #17*, 1995; pp. 74-78. (Reprinted from *High Times* January 1990 issue).

[87] *Autobiography of a World Savior*, by Mel Lyman; Jonas Press; 1966.

[88] *The Lyman Family's Holy Siege of America*, by David Felton*; Rolling Stone*, 1971, Issue No. 98; see also *Mindfuckers: A Source Book on the Rise of Acid Fascism in America Including material on Charles Manson, Mel Lyman, Victor Baranco and Their Followers* by David Felton; pp. 149-153; Straight Arrow Books; 1972.

[89] *The Boston Phoenix*, Section Two, July 16, 1985; article by Michael Matza.

[90] *Apocalypse Culture*; *Mel Lyman: God's Own Story*; Laura Whitcomb; material compiled by John Aes-Nihil; edited by Adam Parfrey; pp. 152-158.

[91] *Once-Notorious '60s Commune Evolves Into Respectability*; *Los Angeles Times*, August 4, 1985; Sunday, Home Edition; View; Part 6; p. 1; see also *Roxbury Commune Survives on Fort Hill* by Seth Cobin; *Bay State Banner*; June 19, 1997.

[92] See *Wikipedia* at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jesus_freak

[93] From *History of the Jesus Movement* by David Di Sabatino, November 1997.

[94] See *Wikipedia* at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jesus_freak

[95] *History of the Jesus Movement* by David Di Sabatino, November 1997.

[96] *The 60's Communes: Hippies and Beyond*, by Timothy Miller, Syracuse University Press, 1999, Chapter 5: *Searching for a Common Center: Religious and Spiritual Communes*, pp. 93-102.

[97] *The Late Great Planet Earth* by Hal Lindsey with C.C. Carlson, Zondervan Publishing Company, May 1970. Central to this book's ideas are the belief in the Second Coming of Christ, the time of Tribulation, and "the Rapture." The Tribulation is an event describes by Christians as a period of great suffering for the people on planet Earth under the rule of the Antichrist. This interpretation of Bible scripture states that the Tribulation will then lead to "the Rapture," an event that Christians believe will take place just before the battle of Armageddon -- the last war to be fought on the face of the earth -- has begun. The Rapture is described as an event where Jesus will return to lift the faithful up into heaven, and as some Christians believe, literally from out of moving cars, airplanes in flight, from the windows of tall buildings and through the ceilings of their own homes. The resurrection of the dead will also occur at the same time, leaving non-Christians behind to suffer through seven more years of pain and horror under the reign of the Antichrist. After the defeat of the Antichrist by an army sent by God, there will follow a time called "the Millennium," described as "a thousand years of peace and plenty and paradise on Earth."

[98] *Satan Is Alive and Well on Planet Earth* by Hal Lindsey and Carole C. Carlson, Zondervan Publishing Company, December 1972; pp. 17-22. This book is an account of Lindsey's condemnation of such "occult" ideas as spiritualism, astrology and the rise of "new age" religions that he claims are the direct result of the Antichrist being in our midst. Lindsey writes that the modern rise of witchcraft and black magic constitutes the "false worship" that Bible scriptures point out as one indication that the Antichrist has arose and is exerting his influence on the world. Lindsey went on to publish a whole series of similar books with "end times" Apocalyptic themes, including *The Terminal Generation* (1976), *The 1980's: Countdown to Armageddon* (1980), *Planet Earth: 2000 A.D.: Will Mankind Survive?* (1994), *The Final Battle* (1995) and *Apocalypse Code* (1997).

[99] *The 60's Communes: Hippies and Beyond*, by Timothy Miller, Syracuse University Press, 1999, Chapter 5: *Searching for a Common Center: Religious and Spiritual Communes*, pp. 93-102.

[100] *The 60's Communes: Hippies and Beyond*, by Timothy Miller, Syracuse University Press, 1999, Chapter 5: *Searching for a Common Center: Religious and Spiritual Communes*, pp. 98-97; see also *The Family (a.k.a. Children Of God, Family Of Love)* at www.religioustolerance.org/fam_love.htm.

[101] *The 60's Communes: Hippies and Beyond*, by Timothy Miller, Syracuse University Press, 1999, *Introduction*, p. xvi.

[102] *The 60's Communes: Hippies and Beyond*, by Timothy Miller, Syracuse University Press, 1999, Chapter 1: *Set and Setting: The Roots of the 1960's-Era Communes*, p. 15.

[103] See *Reflections on the Manson Trial: Journal of a Pseudo-Juror* by Rosemary Baer; W Publishing Group; May 1972; pp. 58-59. Baer, whose husband was a juror during the Manson trial, wrote this book while imagining that it was she who had been a juror instead. Her musings are rooted in her Christian beliefs and her comments are geared toward how she might have applied her religious perspective to the many moral issues she felt were raised by the trial concerning the hippie lifestyle.

[104] *The 60's Communes: Hippies and Beyond*, by Timothy Miller, Syracuse University Press, 1999, Chapter 9: *Doing It: Daily Life in the Communes*, pp. 218-219.

[105] *The 60's Communes: Hippies and Beyond*, by Timothy Miller, Syracuse University Press, 1999, Chapter: 9, *The Worst-Case Scenario: Violence at Taos*, pp. 222-224.

[106] *The Long Prison Journey of Leslie Van Houten: Life Beyond the Cult*, by Karlene Faith; Northeastern University Press; Chapter Five; A New Trial, pp. 109-110.

[107] *The Demon in Death Valley*; *Time Magazine*, December 12, 1969; "Hippies and Violence."

[108] See *Giving the Devil More than His Due* by David Alexander from *The Humanist* magazine, March/April 1990. In this article, Alexander notes that many self-styled "occult experts" have "created a lucrative information industry selling what they claim are documented facts through books, seminars, lectures, and tapes. In reality, what they offer is little more than fundamentalist Christian dogma, the aberrations of mentally ill individuals, the misdirected grief of bereaved parents, and the fantasies of self-seeking opportunists disguised and promoted as scholarship and criminology." See also *Satanism in America*; a two-hundred-plus-page report detailing a three-

year study by Berkeley physicist Shawn Carlson, Committee for the Scientific Examination of Religion (CSER) in which the authors state that: “It is now abundantly clear that a small minority of ultra-right-wing fundamentalist and evangelical Christians, believing in both the reality of Satan as a personality and that the Tribulation is at hand, are responsible for the misinterpretation, the dissemination, and in some instances the outright fabrication of facts to support what is essentially a religious doctrine. These people are not researchers in pursuit of truth, but crusaders against the Antichrist whom they believe *a priori* is living now among us. We submit that people so deeply committed to this religious view can hardly be counted upon to render skeptical and well-reasoned critiques about the dangers of Satanism or occultism in American society.”

[109] *Michelle Remembers* by Michelle Smith, Pocket Books; July 1981. See also *Michelle Remembers: The Debunking of a Myth*, by Denna Allen and Janet Midwinter; *Why the original “ritual abuse” victim may have suffered only from her childhood fantasies*; *The Mail on Sunday*, London, England, September 30, 1990, Page 41; *The “Satanic Scare” of the 1980s*, statement prepared for *Witchcraft, Satanism & Occult Crime*, by Michael A. Aquino, Ph.D., March, 1993.

[110] *Satan’s Underground: The Extraordinary Story of One Woman’s Escape* by Lauren Stratford and Johanna Michaelson (1988). The publisher eventually withdrew this book after serious doubts surfaced about the author’s truthfulness and credibility. (Johanna Michaelson is also the author of *Like Lambs to the Slaughter*, a book in which she claims that cartoons such as the Smurfs and the Carebears teach “black magic” rituals to children and that the practice of Yoga is Satanic. One *Amazon.com* reviewer of *Like Lambs to the Slaughter* wrote, “This book is *hilarious*. The author is paranoid beyond belief: the Carebears represent the seven chakras of eastern mysticism, Dungeons and Dragons supposedly provides textbook examples for summoning demons, and Yoda is part of a global plot to turn our children into communists. One chapter on Ouija boards actually cites *The Weekly World News* as factual proof that they’re physically dangerous!).

[111] See *Satan’s Sideshow: The True Lauren Stratford Story*, by Bob & Gretchen Passantino and Jon Trott; *Cornerstone* magazine, Vol. 18, Issue 90 (1990), pp. 23-28; Additionally, Geraldo Rivera, formally one of the most visible and vocal spokespersons for the “global Satanic cult conspiracy” theory, later recanted and apologized on a December 12, 1995 edition of his show, saying, “I want to announce publicly that as a firm believer of the ‘Believe The Children’ movement of the 1980’s, that started with the McMartin trials in California, but now I am convinced that I was terribly wrong . . . and many innocent people were convicted and went to prison as a result . . . and I am equally positive (that the) ‘Repressed Memory Therapy Movement’ is also a bunch of crap.”

[112] See *The “Satanic Scare” of the 1980s*, statement prepared for *Witchcraft, Satanism & Occult Crime*, by Michael A. Aquino, Ph.D., March, 1993.

[113] *The Haight Ashbury: A History* by Charles Perry, 1st Edition, Random House, 1984.

[114] See *Wild Cult Blamed In Tate Slayings*, December 2, 1969, Los Angeles Times; *Wild-Bearded Hippie Chief Key Figure In Tate Murders Probe*, December 4, 1969, Associated Press. Other examples of sensational headlines include: *Hippie Murders Blamed on Leader*, December 3, 1969, Dallas News/UPI; *Free Love, Blind Obedience to Manson Features of Cult*, December 12, 1969, New York Times News Service; *Hippie Informer in Murder Orgy Fears Manson Curse*, December 7, 1969, United Press International; *Hippie Cult Linked With Girls’ Killings*, December 18, 1969, United Press International.

[115] *Helter Skelter: The True Story of the Manson Murders* by Vincent Bugliosi with Curt Gentry, Bantam Books, First edition, 1974, p. 256; Bugliosi writes, “In Independence, Sandra Good had told me that once, in the desert, Charlie had picked up a dead bird, breathed on it, and the bird had flown away. Sure, Sandy, sure, I replied. Since then I’d heard a great deal about Manson’s alleged “powers”; Susan Atkins, for example, felt he could see and hear everything she did or said. Midway through the arraignment I looked at my watch. It had stopped. Odd. It was the first time I could remember that happening. Then I noticed that Manson was staring at me, a slight grin on his face. It was, I told myself, simply a coincidence.” Concerning this same event, Manson himself attempts to demythologize his own legend by saying, “The media, film directors and book authors took a molehill and made it into a mountain. The myth of Charles Manson has twisted more minds than I was ever accused of touching. Hell, in that book Bugliosi got rich on, he’s got me so powerful that a look from me stopped his watch. In the movie, they had me making the hands of a clock spin by giving it a glance. The only way I ever stopped a watch is by stepping on it. But all the bullshit had people believing I hold some kind of magic.” See *Manson in His Own Words* by Charles Manson and Nuel Emmons, Chapter Nine, Grove Press, July 1988.

[116] See *The Family: The Story of Charles Manson's Dune Buggy Attack Battalion* by Ed Sanders, First edition, 1971, E.P. Dutton and Co.

[117] See *Satan's Power* by William Sims Bainbridge, 1978, by University of California Press, Chapters 1-4. (See also *The Process* by Stephen Sennitt (1989); NOX Press, 15 Oxford Street, Mexborough, S. Yorkshire S64 9RL, England).

[118] See *The Ultimate Evil: An Investigation of America's Most Dangerous Satanic Cult, With New Evidence Linking Charles Manson and Son of Sam*, Doubleday Books, First edition, 1987, Chapter Nine, "The Process."

[119] *Satan's Power*, *The Manson Disaster*; pp. 119-124.

[120] See *Will You Die for Me?: The Man Who Killed For Charles Manson Tells His Own Story*, by Tex Watson, as told to Chaplain Ray, Fleming H. Revell Company, Chapter 1, *Sure Charlie, You Can Kill Me*.

[121] *Social Construction from Within: Satan's Process* by William Sims Bainbridge; pp. 297-310 of *The Satanism Scare* edited by James T. Richardson, Joel Best, and David G. Bromley; New York: Aldine de Gruyter; 1991.

[122] *Satan's Power*, *The Manson Disaster*; pp. 119-124.

[123] *Satan's Power*, *The Manson Disaster*; pp. 119-124.

[124] *Satan's Power*, *The Manson Disaster*; pp. 119-124.

[125] *Helter Skelter*, First edition, 1974, pp. 635-639.

[126] See *Life Magazine*, February 17, 1967 issue, article titled *The Other Culture*; see also *Life Magazine*, December 12, 1969, titled *The Love and Terror Cult*.

[127] See *Literary Hoaxes, Scams & Spoofs*; *Ed Sanders' The Family*; (author unknown).

[128] See *The Family*, by Ed Sanders; *Introduction*, pp. 8-9; First edition, 1971, E.P. Dutton and Co.

[129] *The Family* by Ed Sanders, Chapter Five, *The Process*, pp. 73-88; First edition, 1971, E.P. Dutton and Co.

[130] See *Velle Transcendental Research Association, Inc. and Richard M. Brayton, Plaintiffs, v. Ed Sanders, E. P. Dutton & Co., Inc., and Avon Books, Defendants*, 518 F. Supp. 512 (1981).

[131] See *Bad Company: Drugs, Hollywood, and the Cotton Club Murder* by Steve Wick, Martin Blumenson; St. Martin's Press, 1991; see also *People v. Greenberger*, 58 Cal.App.4th 298 (1997) in which an appellate court found that Radin's murder had been committed simply for revenge, financial gain and possibly out of racial hatred. The prosecution presented evidence to support its theory that Greenberger hired Mentzer, Marti and Lowe to kidnap and murder Roy Radin because Radin had cut her out of a Hollywood movie deal and had been involved in the theft of cocaine and money from her house. The same appellate opinion mentions the fact that there may have even been a racial motive for the murder. A key prosecution witness (Raja Korban) testified that he went to a meeting at which the plan to murder Radin was discussed. During direct examination, Korban testified that both Marti and Mentzer made anti-Semitic statements, referring to Radin as the "fat big Jew" and that Marti had a huge oil portrait of Adolph Hitler and other Nazi memorabilia in his home. (Police investigators conducting a search of Marti's residence indeed found the Nazi memorabilia that Korban testified about). Trial witness William Rider also testified that Marti told him that "he hated Jews and that he enjoyed killing the big fat Jew."

[132] See *A Review and Commentary on Maury Terry's Ultimate Evil* by G.M. Kelly; originally published in *The Newaeon Newsletter*, Volume VI, Number 5, November 1989 E.V. In this commentary, the author writes that, "Had Arlis Perry been the victim of a 'killer cult,' one of Terry's favorite phrases in the book, or was there some more common motive for the killing? The Santa Clara Sheriff's Department 'directed a hunt for a local sexual psychopath' and Terry claims that they were ignoring the 'evidence' and so acting with negligence. In fact, throughout his book, Maury Terry claims that every police department involved in anything anywhere in the U.S.

that he was investigating acted negligently, incompetently, refusing to admit to the 'evidence' of a single Satanic cult at work in all of these cases, and even covering up and burying 'facts' that proved that such a cult existed and was the cause of the various murders he had looked into."

[133] See *Turn Off Your Mind: The Mystic Sixties and the Dark Side of the Age of Aquarius*, by Gary Lachman, *The Disinformation Company*, 2001; pp. 247-249; see also *Velle Transcendental Research Association, Inc.*, v. *Ed Sanders, E. P. Dutton & Co., Inc.*, No. CV 74-2985-RJK; U.S.D.C, Central District Of California; 518 F. Supp. 512; May 27, 1981. The abuse of the child at the Solar Lodge would later be referred to by the news media as the "Boy in the Box" incident. In a legal brief written in the case of *Velle Transcendental Research Association, Inc.*, v. *Ed Sanders*, the court, speaking about the press coverage, noted that: "These articles address the details of the abuse of six-year-old Anthony Saul Gibbons by the members of O.T.O., who were presently living at the ranch in Riverside County. The articles frequently mention Jean Brayton and Richard Brayton by name, and many mention that the group held for the boy's abuse belonged to a 'cult-like' group called the O.T.O. For example, the *Daily News* of Indio, California, states on October 23, 1969, that those under indictment 'were members of a 'group' known as OTO, which had headquarters at 2627 Menlo Ave., Los Angeles.' The article describes the group's alleged purpose of seeking spiritual development and identifies the leader of the group as Jean Brayton, plaintiff's wife. Similarly, articles which appeared in the Daily Enterprise, the Daily News, and the Daily News Palm Desert describe those individuals indicted as members of the O.T.O. 'cult.' They depict the practice of the group as consisting of various degrees of membership, and point out that members of the first degree wear a black robe, those of the second wear a dagger and triangle, and so on. While the local articles are the most elaborate in their description of the group's practice of initiation and ritual, almost all of the articles address the issue of the group's unusual way of life. Most of the articles mention the O.T.O. and Jean Brayton as being responsible for the boy's treatment."

[134] See *The New York Law Journal* for June 24, 1988; see also *Giving the Devil More than His Due* by David Alexander from *The Humanist* magazine, March/April 1990. In this article, the author notes that "Obviously, Maury Terry has not been exposed to much training in logical thinking or rational investigative techniques. His theory [concerning the O.T.O./Son of Sam connections] is conspiracy 'reasoning' at its best." "The allegations against the Process church in Terry's book were copied virtually verbatim from a now-obscure book *The Family* published shortly after the Manson murders. The author of *The Family* lost a defamation suit brought against him by the Process church; part of the settlement included striking all reference to the Process church from future editions. So much of the book was based upon these false allegations that it wasn't possible to remove them all and still have a book. *The Family* subsequently went out of print. Terry has not been sued by the Process church because it no longer exists; thus, he is able to reprint with impunity material which has previously been judged inaccurate and libelous." Authors Note: *The Family* is back on the market now, only minus the chapter on the Process. In a third edition of the book, all references to the Process are made as "an English Satanic society in the 1960's."

[135] See *Apocalypse Culture*, edited by Adam Parfrey; *The Process: A Personal Reminiscence* by R.N. Taylor, pp. 159-171. Mr. Taylor met members of the Process while performing as a musician in a Process coffee house in Chicago. He also created artwork for many of the Process publications.

[136] *Classic Snuff Films*, 1994, by Rider McDowell (as reported for *The San Francisco Chronicle*).

[137] See *New York Times* article dated November 3, 1981; p. B7; *Drug Link is Seen in Chelsea Killings*. Excerpted text from the article reads: "Detectives investigating the slayings Saturday night of a photographer and a Smith College student in the photographer's Chelsea apartment said they believed the killings might have resulted from a "drug-oriented robbery." Both victims had been shot in the head. Detective Daniel O'Neill said the photographer, Ronald Sisman, 39 years old, of 207 West 22nd Street was believed to have sold drugs "on the side to supplement his income." The police said a small amount of a white powder, possibly cocaine, had been found in the apartment. The other victim, Elizabeth Platzman, 20, of Roslyn, Long Island, had met the photographer last summer through a relative, and, the detective said, had the "misfortune to be in the apartment at the wrong time."

[138] Although there was indeed a clamor to have the case reopened in 1996, top police officials in the New York City Police Department apparently foiled the efforts to have files pulled from those precincts that were involved in the original Son of Sam investigation. That fact seemed to lend fuel to the idea that a conspiracy to keep the case from being reopened was afoot. However, the N.Y.P.D. Deputy Commissioner for Public Information, Marilyn Mode, was quoted by a news reporter as saying that this was "totally untrue, nothing was quashed," and

went on further to say that a conspiracy to prevent the truth from coming out was "ludicrous." She also noted that the people who now run the department had nothing to do with its operation at the time of the murders.

[139] *The Ghost of 77*, by Maury Terry; *Gear Magazine*; Nov/Dec Issue; Volume I, Issue II.

[140] *A&E Biography - David Berkowitz*; 2000.

[141] *Investigative Reports: Son of Sam Speaks: The Untold Story*; A&E Home Video; 1996.

[142] Written correspondence between David Berkowitz and the author.

[143] See *Helter Skelter*, First edition, 1974, pp. 637-638. In fairness to the Process Church regarding the claim made in *Helter Skelter* that they, like Manson, had an interest in "[using] the Negro as a whole to begin some sort of militant thing," i.e. to start a black-white race war in America, it must be pointed out that Bugliosi himself notes that this information was simply the opinion of one disaffiliated/disgruntled Process member and as such, may not have represented that group's official position. I was not able to find a source that could verify this one way or the other.

[144] *Satanic, Occult, Ritualistic Crime: a Law Enforcement Perspective* by Kenneth V. Lanning M.S., Supervisory Special Agent, National Center for the Analysis of Violent Crime, FBI Academy, Quantico, Virginia, October 1989.

[145] *Friends Find Their Calling* by Lou Kilzer, *Rocky Mountain News*, February 28, 2004; see also www.bestfriends.org.

[146] See *Friends Find Their Calling* by Lou Kilzer, *Rocky Mountain News*, February 28, 2004. Not long after I began my research into "*Best Friends*" for this chapter, I was contacted by another researcher who is an assistant editor for a Boulder, Colorado daily newspaper who was also looking into the "Best Friends" angle regarding its past ties to the Process Church. We both ended up commiserating with each other about the general lack of reliable information and sources and also compared notes on the large number of "conspiracy theorists" and general paranoid types that one ultimately encounters when digging into this story.

[147] See website located at www.gnosticliberationfront.org (now defunct).

[148] From personal email correspondence between the author and Process member Brother Isaiah.

[149] See *Friends Find Their Calling* by Lou Kilzer, *Rocky Mountain News*, February 28, 2004; some additional information concerning the current status and whereabouts of Robert DeGrimston was excerpted from personal email correspondence between the author and Mark Turner, webmaster of the *CharileManson.com* website.

[150] *Dateline NBC* special, *A Touch of Evil*; as reported by Dennis Murphy.

[151] See *Victim of Recovered Memory Psychologists Receives $7.5 Million Award* by Brian Carnell, April 17, 2004; see also *Bizarre Therapy Leads To $7.35M Malpractice Settlement*; www.NBC5.com with *The Associated Press*, February 12, 2004.

[152] *A Closer Look* broadcast for April 15, 2004; see also www.4acloserlook.com.

[153] Personal email correspondence between the author and Barbara Williamson, Media Relations Manager, Best Friends Animal Society.

Additional Sources & Recommended Reading

Labyrinth13: True Tales of the Occult, Crime & Conspiracy, by Curt Rowlett.

America's Magic Cult of Ignorance, David O'Reilly, San Jose Mercury News, 1993-AUG-8, Page 1L.

Satanic Panic, Jeffrey Victor, Open Court, Chicago, 1993.

Rivera's 'Devil Worship' was TV at its Worst, Tom Shales, San Jose Mercury News, 1988-OCT-31, Page 11B.

Inside The 'Satan Scare' Industry: The Devil Makes Them Do It, by: Debbie Nathan, from *In These Times*, a weekly newspaper based in Chicago, at 2040 N. Milwaukee Ave., Chicago, IL 60647.

The Satanism Scare, University of Pennsylvania, by Gerry O'Sullivan, Postmodern Culture, v.1 n.2 (January, 1991).

Satanism: Skeptics Abound, by John Johnson and Steve Padilla Los Angeles Times April 23, 1991, Page A-1.

The Seduction of the Gullible by John Martin, Procrustes Press, Box 134 West PDO, Nottingham, NG7 7BW, England (ISBN 0 9522 510 1 9).

The Gods of The Process In Six Books by William Sims Bainbridge.

Barking Up the Wrong Tree, article debunking the Son of Sam "Satanic cult connections" by Curt Rowlett, *Fortean Times* issue # 163, page 49, October 2002. (Included as Appendix 4 in this book).

Process Church of the Final Judgment v. Ed Sanders and E.P. Dutton & Co., Inc., 338 F. Supp. 1396 (1972).

Sympathy for the Devil, investigative article on the Process Church by Gary Lachman, *Fortean Times*, issue # 134, May 2000.

Orange Sunshine: The Brotherhood of Eternal Love and Its Quest to Spread Peace, Love, and Acid to the World, by Nicholas Schou.

Appendix 1

Interview with the Process Church of the Final Judgment

While researching the history and the beliefs of the Process Church for this book, I came into contact with several members of the Process, including two original members, Brother Isaiah and Sister Angela. After we had corresponded for a period of time, both of them agreed to be interviewed by me. What follows is a "Q & A" as excerpted from our correspondence. (Reprinted with permission).

Q: Your group is made up of original members of The Process Church and you are attempting to reestablish the Process and return the group to its original core belief system. According to my research, there was another group claiming to be the original Process Church who referred to themselves as "The Processeans." Is that a correct term? And what official name is your group going by?

A: The full name of our group is still "The Process Church of the Final Judgment" or "The Process" for short. However, all members are called "Processeans," in the same way that members of the Roman Catholic Church are called "Catholics." "Processeans" is a generic term encompassing all members. So yes, the congregation would be referred to as Processeans.

Q: Is there more than one Process group? Are there other groups claiming to be the "real" Process at the same time as your group is?

A: No, there is only one group that is the real Process and that is us. What happened previously was that members who were scattered across the United States and Canada made separate attempts to try to restart "The Process." Unfortunately the result from this has been a sporadic reporting of small groups who were claiming to be the actual Process Church. Now that we have all finally combined our efforts, we are again united

and with Brothers Isaiah, Thomas and Harmanus and Sister Angela as our central core, we now have a hierarchy in place that is able to lead the Church to the reformation. However, there are some groups that use some of "The Process" Teachings, such as Telesis, Processors and several self-help groups, but none of these adhere to all the Teachings as we do.

Q: Where is your church presently located?

A: A lot of the activities of the "Head Office" are currently being done electronically through the Internet; the location of our so-called "Main Chapter "is yet to be decided. It will naturally be located in a fairly large urban center; again New York is being considered as well as Toronto, Canada.

Q: How many chapters of the Process Church are there today? And in which cities are they located?

A: At present, we have four "Closed Chapters." A Closed Chapter is one in which all the activities are closed to the general public and is strictly for training, inside worship and internal structuring. Soon we are hoping to be able to change their status to "Open Chapters" where everyone will be welcome to enter and worship and enjoy all the activities that we will have in place. At present, the Chapters are in Albany, New York; San Antonio, Texas; Savannah, Georgia and Toronto, Canada, with plans to move some of the smaller ones to larger centers when the time permits.

Q: Can you give me a brief synopsis that would explain the essence of Process philosophy today?

A: We believe in the Unity of Christ and Satan and that one day all the innumerable parts of God will be brought back together. The reconciliation of opposites is our key. Our belief in the Universal Law, which states "As You Give, So Shall You Receive" is one of our paramount beliefs. This means that anything that we would do to anyone or anything is going to be given back to us in kind. In other words causing harm becomes tantamount to committing suicide and would be definitely not be in our best interests.

Q: What drew you personally to the group?

A: (Provided by Brother Isaiah). I personally was drawn to The Process over 30 years ago. It was in 1971 in Toronto, Canada. I had just gone through what I perceived to be some very traumatic events in my life and I was in search of spiritual enlightenment. I had been involved in the "Jesus" movement and was actually considered a "Jesus Freak." During my time with the Jesus movement, I found that not all my questions were being answered. However, while trying to convert some Processeans (who were actually friends of mine from school) to "Christ," I found a very interesting thing was happening: the Processean Teachings were answering the questions that I had been asking, so upon further investigation and study I decided to be baptized into The Process Church in the Toronto Chapter. At first I was an Acolyte, which is basically your person off the street who is coming in to find out what "The Process" is all about, and getting into the very start of Process beliefs. After about six months of study, I decided to take it to the next step and was baptized as a Disciple. Again this is your basic member of the "congregation," if you will, but the Teachings are far more involved as is your level of participation and activity with the Church. At this point tithing is involved as is working within the Church in the social programs and helping maintain the church property and the atmosphere of the Church coffee houses.

During my time as a Disciple, I traveled and visited what was then every Chapter that The Process had, including Miami, New Orleans, Boston, New York, Chicago and of course Toronto, where I had originally met The Process. During my travels in one of my visits to Chicago, Mother Hagar approached me and asked me to consider "going on line" and become a "Messenger of the Unity," which after some consideration I did. I was baptized as an O.P. Messenger and given the name Brother Isaiah. An O.P. Messenger is an "Outside Processean" Messenger. All that means is that you live in a Church-owned property that is not physically connected to the Church and is the beginning rank of the "Ministers" within the Church. Now all your time is spent learning Processean Teachings and working in and around the Church. Basically it is the start of a ministerial life, dedicated to serving the Gods and helping others. The only difference is that we were considered "abstract" to say the least.

Now I use the name Brother Isaiah. There will come a time when the rank may be changed; I haven't fully made up my mind yet. It is actually a very large step to take and the undertaking is massive. Personally, I think the effort is well worth it to get "The Process" back up and running and get the name of "The Process" cleared once and for all. Sister Angela found "The Process" in New Orleans and she knew immediately that she

was meant to be a part of us.

Q: What, if any, social programs were the Process Church engaged in?

A: The social programs that The Process was involved in were numerous. In every city that we were involved in, we had a free kitchen and clothing center for the homeless and poor. There was also a food bank before food banks became commonplace. We also did counseling for people who were having problems or wanted to kick a drug or alcohol habit and a crisis hotline which fielded calls from police, hospitals, basically anywhere that we were needed. These few examples were only the tip of the programs that we ran. Each Chapter had their own visitation program that varied due to regulation differences from state to state; there were visitations to state hospitals, prisons, and old age homes. Work was also done with the Florida Special Olympics. Our musicians and groups performed and entertained all over. One thing that we have to keep in mind is that the work was not just done in the cities where we were located but we also traveled to other areas and had "Field Disciples" or people located in areas that are out of reach of the full chapter. The people who lived and worked these programs were just Acolytes or Disciples, but they knew that their services were needed and arranged them on their own, with the Chapters blessing, of course.

Q: Did the original Process have the belief that an actual, physical Apocalyptic "end of the world" was at hand where all but 144,000 of the "chosen people" would be saved, similar to what many mainstream Christian groups believe about the battle of Armageddon? Or was that something that was expressed only in symbolic terms?

A: (Provided by Sister Angela). The Process originally believed in an apocalyptic end to the world. We still do, but I personally believe that it is not going to happen for quite some time. We humans seem fixed on the idea of being either the first or the last. And we also believed that the number of those who would be part of the New Beginning would be 144,000.

But by the early 70's there was less talk of this and perhaps this is the reason: In the beginning of The Process much of our beliefs came from Robert [DeGrimston] channeling the Gods; much of this was what you could call "Old Testament, Wrath of God" type stuff. What I have learned of channeling over the years is that initially we instinctively filter this channeling through our own religious, philosophical or cultural experience. As a result, the many of thousands who have channeled merely use this to expound and confirm their own belief system rather than entertain the possibility that "everything we know is wrong."

Initially this is on a sub-conscious level but after one channels repeatedly it becomes clear that you are interpreting rather than just channeling. One notices a distinct difference between Robert's Teachings in the beginning and years later. The evolution of The Process appears connected to this change. From my own experiences with channeling, I believe that we have linked the Apocalypse on too close of a timeline with the New Beginning. They appear to be totally independent of each other but we , in our quest to boost our own ego, have placed them occurring almost concurrent. The error is, I believe, that time is different from our perspective than from the source of our channeling. Imagine the situation where a child asks you when something will occur and you respond, "In a little while." The child thinks that means five minutes (or less) but the phrase means something different to you. It is about perspective. After all, aren't we just visually impaired children stumbling around in a forest? What the New Beginning entails is kind of like speculating what really happens after the instant of death. Perhaps everything just begins again like the Buddhist belief in order/chaos.

A: (Same question, answer provided by Brother Isaiah). In the beginning it was indeed believed that Armageddon and the "end of the world" was coming, as did many other religions, Christianity included. Over time it has gradually taken its place as something that is still inevitable, but does not have the overpowering importance that was once placed upon it. Part of that was the times, I suppose…in the 1970's it seemed that the whole world was in shambles and that nothing short of Armageddon could solve the issues.

Q: Did Robert DeGrimston ever actually believe himself to be the reincarnation of Jesus Christ? Ed Sanders claims in his book "The Family" that while The Process lived at Xtul they were involved in intensive studies of their past lives and had delved heavily into the Old Testament of the Christian Bible. He claims that a revelation came to Robert and other Process members about their "past lives" and that Robert believed he was a reincarnation of Jesus.

A: (Provided by Brother Isaiah). Robert never believed that he was the physical reincarnation of Christ. That was a story that started at the New Orleans Chapter, I believe. A visitor to the chapter remarked on how they thought that the resemblance in Robert's picture was amazing and the story took a life of its own. While in Xtul, extensive study of past lives and the Old Testament were done, and indeed several revelations occurred (but not that Robert was Christ reincarnate).

Q: What are your opinions about the wild conspiracy theories that have grown up around the Process since its original inception and why?

A: This is a question that I and others have had running through our minds for years now. The stories are so wide and varied that some seem to have taken on "urban legend" status. I think that originally the stories of Satan worship and ritual sacrifice arose out of fear of the unknown. The 70's were a strange time and things seemed to be falling apart and people were looking for scapegoats. The Process seemed to be the target of choice, particularly for the "right wing" activists. The mere mention of Satan would send them scurrying and naturally if Satan was involved, so were all the other ills attributed to him.

There were also the "seedier" elements that attended our coffee houses as well. In the beginning, people came in just because they heard we worshipped Satan, which of course is wrong. But they would not be persuaded otherwise and some left or were removed and were disgruntled and the strange stories of drug crazed orgies started to surface. Some of the other rumors that have surfaced are just plain crazy. It appears that some people have gotten hold of one or two pieces of our literature and taken everything out of context and started saying and doing all sorts of things using our name. Exactly where Ed Sanders and Maury Terry got there information from has always been suspect, but I would hazard a guess and say that some people will say anything if money was offered for their interview and obviously, the spicier the better. Absolutely none of the accusations that have been leveled at us have ever been proven or would stand up to close scrutiny.

The conspiracy theories come in part from our keeping much about The Process private. For centuries the Christian religions have used Satan to evoke fear and hate in their own followers. (All those who disagree with church doctrine must be possessed of the devil and such). But The Process recognizes that both Christ and Satan are equal parts of God and their purpose is divine/God-given. We follow Christ's Teachings, but do not accept the "believe that Christ died for your sins and be saved" rhetoric which is considered to be essential by Christian doctrine. This could easily be construed by traditional Christians as a direct attack upon their entire belief system. And they follow the instinctive human reaction to a perceived attack: they counter-attack. I have seen Christian websites where the name "Process Church of the Final Judgment" is considered evil (like the word Satan). We humans judge by difference, but when we see a difference we immediately categorize this perceived difference as either better or worse, threatening or non-threatening, superior or inferior. And of course the natural assumption is to think that what you were "taught as a child by your loving parents" must be right and anything else is wrong/evil. Christians call us Satanists and Satanists call us Christians.

Appendix 2

Interview with Michael Mountain of Best Friends Animal Society

Below is a rewrite of a very informal telephone interview that I conducted on Tuesday, Aug. 24, 2004 with Michael Mountain, president of Best Friends Animal Society. While speaking with Michael, it quickly became obvious to me that he was a forthright, charming, and highly intelligent individual who passionately believes in the work he is doing at Best Friends.

Please note that this is not a verbatim transcript of my interview with Michael and that all of the answers attributed to him below involve my paraphrasing of his words from those notes that I took during our conversation. (The full text of this appendix has been reviewed and approved by Mr. Mountain for publication in this book).

During the course of our conversation, I asked Michael, what sort of public reaction *Best Friends* had seen after the publication of the February 28, 2004 *Rocky Mountain News* article (*Friends Find Their Calling* by Lou Kilzer, *Rocky Mountain News*), a story that revealed how a series of corporate records linked *Best Friends* to the same 1967 incorporation of The Process Church of the Final Judgment. Michael's answer was

that, with the exception of one local newspaper, no other media organizations had contacted *Best Friends* about the story.

I also asked Michael to give an opinion about the wild conspiracy theories that have grown up around the original Process Church since its original inception in the 1960's and in a rather neat and quite fitting summation, he offered up a quote uttered by the character Rhett Butler at the end of the *Gone With the Wind* movie, specifically, "Frankly, my dear, I don't give a damn." He explained that his use of that quote meant that there is no point in chasing down unfounded rumors on the Internet, and that nothing anyone has to say about The Process Church applies to the work of *Best Friends* at all.

I also discussed with Michael the April 15, 2004 radio interview on the program "A Closer Look," in which Maury Terry seemed to be implying that the *Best Friends Animal Society* could possibly be a front for a new, "undercover" version of the old Process Church and may be involved in criminal activity of a "Satanic" nature taking place behind closed doors at *Best Friends*. Michael's comment to that was that back in the 1970s the Process Church filed a libel suit when someone else made similar accusations, and that the publishers promptly offered a settlement that included an apology and the removal of all offending materials. He added that as far as he was concerned, people were free to say whatever they wanted to about the Process Church. But he said very clearly that if anyone were ever to accuse *Best Friends* of being involved in any criminal or illegal activity, they would have their lawyers step in immediately.

Michael's final word on his involvement with the Process Church was in essence the same as he laid out in the Rocky Mountain News story, i.e., that the group had set out during the 60's to lead an exemplary lifestyle in what were very unusual and interesting times and that in many ways they accomplished their goals. The Process Church was rooted in the same spirit as what many other young people were doing at the time: searching for higher meanings and having a lot of fun along the way.

Appendix 3

List of Hippie Exploitation and Manson-Inspired Films

"God is alive and well and living in a sugar cube."

Line from the 1968 hippie exploitation film *Psych-Out*.

Assembled here is a list of hippie exploitation and Manson family-inspired films, spanning the years from 1967 to present. Most of the films involve fictional Hollywood plots, with a few masquerading as "documentaries," but which really amounted -- then and now -- to little more than anti-hippie propaganda. However, because most of these films were produced during the actual time of the hippie movement, shot on real locations and often employed bona-fide hippies as "extras," they serve as excellent time capsules for that period.

Also included here for reference purposes are a few perhaps more "authentic" films produced during the hippie era (such as *Woodstock* and *Gimme Shelter*) that depict the 1960's counter culture at its height.

But could it be that these old films are much more than just a window into the past? It should be noted that Manson family victim Sharon Tate was an aspiring film actress in her own right. In the book *The Manson Files*, the editor notes how Sharon Tate's final movie appearance in *The 13 Chairs* (1969) ends with a scene that may have actually been eerily "prophetic" in nature: At the end of the movie, the "murdered" Tate is shown lying dead while the image of a laughing figure materializes over her that is a dead-ringer for a bearded, longhaired Charles Manson. (1)

1967-1969 Films

The Hallucination Generation (1967)*Riot on Sunset Strip* (1967) *The Love-Ins* (1967) *The Trip* (1967) *LA's First Love In* (1967*The Weird World of LSD* (1967)*Something's Happening* (1967)*The Hippie Revolt* (1967)*Psych-Out* (1968)*Blonde on a Bum Trip* (1968)*Mantis in Lace* (1968)*Wild in the Streets* (1968)*The Young Runaways* (1968)*The Hooked Generation* (1968)*Easy Rider* (1969)*Head* (1968)*Cult of the Damned* (1969)*Alice's Restaurant* (1969)

1970-1979 Films

Woodstock (1970)*The Helter Skelter Murders* (1970)*The Love Commune* (1970)*Joe* (1970) *Gimme Shelter* (1970)
I Drink Your Blood (1971)*The Psychedelic Priest* a.k.a. (*Electric Shades of Grey*) (1971)*Billy Jack* (1971)
The Night God Screamed (1971)*The Love Thrill Murders* (1971)
The Manson Massacre (1972)*Thumb Tripping* (1972)*The Deathmaster* (1972)*Bummer!* (1973)
Manson (1973)*Jesus Christ Superstar* (1973)
Snuff a.k.a. *Slaughter* (1975)*Terror on the Beach* (1973)
Hair (1979)*Helter Skelter* (1976) (original television mini-series)

1980-2004 Films

Berkeley in the Sixties (1990)*The Doors* (1991)*The Manson Family* (a.k.a. *Charlie's Family*) (1997)*The '60s* (1999) (original television mini-series)*The Cockettes* (2002)*Helter Skelter* (2004) (remake of the 1976 television mini-series).

Notes and Sources to Appendix 6

(1) *The Manson Files*; edited by Nikolas Schreck; Amok Press, 1988; p. 190.

Appendix 4

Barking Up the Wrong Tree

By Curt Rowlett

The following is an original article debunking the Son of Sam "Satanic cult connections" as it appeared in Fortean Times issue # 163, page 49, October 2002. It was written in response to John Sanders' article, "I am the Son of Sam," from Fortean Times issue # 161.

It was with great anticipation that I began to read John Sanders' *Fortean Times* article *Mr. Berkowitz's Neighborhood*. I have been interested in the Son of Sam case since my early teen years and I have always had high hopes that someone would finally concentrate on one of the more intriguing aspects of the Son of Sam murders, i.e., that evidence may point to the possible involvement of at least three (and perhaps four) persons.

However, I was disappointed, but not surprised, that the focus of the article quickly shifted to the old unproven and, in my opinion, thoroughly discredited notion that a huge underground network of evil Satanists were actually behind the Son of Sam and other murders.

While I applaud Mr. Sanders' efforts, after much careful consideration of that same argument, I have come to the conclusion that the only ones who seem to benefit in any way by that theory are one person with desires to sell a book and another person who hopes to influence a parole board.

I lived on the East Coast during the height of the Son of Sam murders and have been a serious occult scholar for over 25 years. Shortly after reading Maury Terry's book *The Ultimate Evil*, I wrote a detailed article about the alleged "Satanic" aspects of the case. (See *Charles Manson, Son of Sam and the Process Church of the Final Judgment: Exploring the Alleged Connections*).

In that article, I attempted to show that virtually all of Maury Terry's "smoking guns" were simply inaccurate interpretations of the facts; that there is no real evidence of a vast Satanic cult conspiracy responsible for multiple murders, drug dealing, rape, and an underground network of child pornography.

I have learned that most of the persons who have written about alleged "Satanic" connections to this case and/or who tout themselves as "occult crime experts" have absolutely no concept of what does and does not constitute actual evidence of an occult or Satanic nature. As a result, the most mundane things are reported in a sinister light. For example, John Sanders reiterates Maury Terry's old observation about spray-painted "Satanic" graffiti in New York's Untermyer Park and the fact that some dead German Shepherd dogs were once found there. While he does not overtly say so, he implies that this is the work of the Process Church,

a notion that is contradicted by the fact that the Process was well known for their stance against animal abuse of any sort, a set of values that predates modern animal rights activism by more than forty years. And it should be noted that many, many public places have “Satanic” type graffiti spray-painted about. I could take you to several such areas right here in my own neighborhood. In most cases, this graffiti is the work of bored teenagers, who are into black metal and gothic music, and as such, should never be used to make overly-sinister connections to murder.

Maury Terry’s book was published during the apex of what has become known as the great “Satanic Panic” here in America and abroad, a period of literal “witch hunting” and bigoted religious intolerance that continues to this day. During that time, I and many other occultists were actively engaged in combating the lies and false accusations leveled at members of “occult” or “Satanic” styled religions by members of the press and the fundamentalist Christian right. I can state unequivocally that, with very, very few exceptions, the majority of the “evidence” alleged to be of a “Satanic” nature was purposely misread by people with an axe to grind (quite often members of fundamentalist Christian sects), reporters looking for a story at any cost, and those who misinterpreted the evidence because they simply did not understand what real occultism is.

There are some individuals for whom the Process Church of the Final Judgment serves as the foundation for evidence of a global conspiracy involving Satanic occultists. These same people, when interviewed, darkly hint that the evidence of the existence of this conspiracy is out there, but that it is being withheld to protect certain people. In fact, there is absolutely no evidence then or now that the Process Church of the Final Judgment or any of its alleged offshoots were ever involved in any illegal activity, nor is there any evidence that the group was inherently violent. What I discovered after reading the available books and literature, interviewing former Process Church members and closely examining the claims, is that the Process Church was not truly a Satanic religion, but rather a group of well-meaning and perhaps misguided, “New Age” style Christians who made use of a few Satanic trappings and imagery.

Evidence for multiple perpetrators in the Son of Sam case seems to be there, but it is my opinion that no real work has been done in that regard. I would love to see someone with the time, energy, and financial ability undertake an unbiased and truly objective investigation into that area. As it stands right now, the allegations of occult connections have, in my opinion, significantly damaged this area of the case.

For persons with no understanding of the nature of occult religions, it is very tempting and easy to lump all occult beliefs and practices together. It is my sincere hope that future researchers of the Son of Sam case will undertake the research necessary to keep facts separated from fantasy, and ultimately avoid the bigotry and bias perpetrated by authors whose world view is limited by their own religious beliefs. 190.

Appendix 5

Two Personal Psychedelic Experiences

Below are my recollections of two of the most intense and significant psychedelic experiences that I have had in the past, one via psilocybin mushrooms and the other via LSD. While I personally feel that these experiences were extremely beneficial to me, I urge you, the reader, to not take my experiences as recounted here as any sort of endorsement for the general use of psychedelic drugs per se. Such experimentation can be dangerous, not in the classic government drug war paranoia/disinformation sort of way, but rather because psychedelics are very powerful, mind-altering substances and the uninitiated can get into real trouble, very quickly from their misuse. Caveat lector!

A moment’s moment can be an eternity. And all the while time has its flow. How many lifetimes can you have in infinity? It’s all there for us to know.

From the song, *Is It That You Recall (Moments)* by Brooks Poston & Paul Watkins

Only after the great awakening will we realize that this is the great dream. And yet fools think they are awake, presuming to know that they are rulers or herdsmen. How dense!

Zhuangzi

A Mushroom Trip of Great Personal Significance

I ingested approximately five grams of dried mushrooms of the psilocybe cubensis variety that I had grown myself. Unknown to me at that time was the fact that cultivated mushrooms are much more potent than the wild variety of mushrooms that I had picked and consumed in the past. As a result, the experience was much more intense than I had anticipated and stranger than anything I could have ever imagined.

After eating the mushrooms, I turned out all of the lights and lay down on my bed with some soft music playing. As I began to come onto the experience, I was greeted by some very intense visuals and a growing nausea that felt like a very tight knot in my stomach. (This nausea eventually subsided and may have been in part due to a bit of nervousness on my part, as I have never quite gotten used to the tenseness one sometimes feels when first going up on psychedelics).

Because I was starting to feel a bit uneasy and sensed that I needed some support and reassurance, I asked my wife to come into the room and she sat with me on the bed. After talking to her for a few minutes, I realized that all I could really do was lie back, close my eyes and let the mushrooms take me wherever they would.

For the next hour, I continued to go deeper and deeper into the effects and could feel my ego starting to dissolve into a sort of nothingness, i.e., a rather rapid dissolution of the boundaries between this reality and that of the fully psychedelicized mushroom state.

All of a sudden, everything shifted dramatically, in that it seemed as if I suddenly "woke up" and became aware that the true nature of time and my personal being was that of an endless and infinite cycle. When I say "woke up," it felt as if I had just emerged from a long sleep where I had dreamed that the person I thought I was and the life that I thought I had been living was not really *who* and *what* I was at all and that this "new" waking reality was in fact my *actual reality* and *always had been*. (Reflecting on this part of the experience later, I was reminded of an old Zen poem that has a line that goes something like, "Am I a man who dreamed he was a butterfly, or am I a butterfly now dreaming he is a man?" that perfectly describes exactly what that experience was like for me).

Stranger still, I felt as if I was suddenly caught up in the "winds of time" and was now being carried rapidly through different corridors of time, where I could view all of my past lives and existences. In this astonishing space, I felt that I had been and still was eternally cycling through countless numbers of previous and future lives, some that had been good, some that had been unpleasant, and some that were yet to be. In rapid succession, I saw how I had lived and died in each of these past lives (there seemed to be more than I could count) and understood that ultimately, I had little or no control over how and where I would reincarnate to next. (Let me also state here that, at the time I experienced this voyage, I did not hold any personal beliefs about the validity of reincarnation. I was fully aware that I was not actually dead at the moment, but rather my impression at the time was that the mushrooms had somehow flung me into the *world of the dead* while I was still living and that I was witnessing what happens to you after you have *actually* died. Speculating about this later, my overall impression of this part of the experience was that I felt as if I was an intruder in that space and that I was learning truths about what happens to people after they die that I wasn't really supposed to know; a sort of "spy" in the afterworld, if you will. I later learned that this experience was quite similar to what the *Tibetan Book of the Dead* refers to as being in the *bardo*, that interval between one's death and the next rebirth).

Incredibly, my wife had suddenly taken on the look of a classic "alien being" or elf, and in my mind's eye, I flashed on the notion that she was in fact a sort of "guardian entity," a being who was always with me, but who usually remained out of the "normal" sight of my waking consciousness. It felt to me that I could now "remember" that as my guardian, he/she/it had been my guide throughout my entire existence and had actually accompanied me as a guide, teacher, and protector through all of my past lives over vast eons of time.

And then things got even weirder: I now flashed on the notion that this guardian entity and I were now in some sort of cosmic "way station." It seemed like I was suddenly "remembering" that this way station was a place that I returned to each time I was waiting to reincarnate into my next life as it now seemed that I had found myself in-between lives. (I perceived this "way station" to be somewhat similar in nature to what the Catholics believe about Purgatory where one's life is examined and judged on its merits prior to sending you off

to your next incarnation).

Again, as if waking from a dream, I suddenly “remembered” that each time I died, I came to this same “way station” where I would discuss the details of my previous life with my guardian, but that once I reincarnated, I would lose all memory of my guardian until the next time I returned to the way station. I had a deep sense of knowing that I had existed as a conscious being for a long, long time and that I always would. During all of this, it seemed to me that time had sped up and that whole days were passing by in seconds.

After almost six hours, I began to come down and return back into consensus reality.

This particular trip was one of my most intense with mushrooms and has really fed my interest in learning more about what is the true nature of time, what exactly is behind the idea of reincarnation, and the shamanic belief that it is possible to slip past the thin veil of “normal” reality, journey to universes that exist parallel to our own and return with important information. I have since learned that time themes and visions of past lives are a common theme of the psilocybin mushroom experience. (Worth noting here are my impressions of two other psilocybin experiences, where both had visions that seemed to be taking place “underground” or in tunnels or caverns. In one, I was moving along a series of tunnels, not unlike a circulatory system; in another, I was standing inside of a dimly-lighted cavern conversing telepathically about love with a giant moth that was glowing pink and purple!).

My Most Intense LSD Trip

Here is the story of an LSD voyage that I had many years ago that was one of the most intense altered states that I have ever experienced. This particular trip happened long after I had already become a veteran of numerous inner voyages with a variety of psychedelic substances.

Looking back, I can say now that I had become somewhat presumptuous about my ability to cope with the altered state, thinking that I would never lose the ability to deal with whatever a psychedelic drug handed to me. In part this had to do with the low dosage level of the average hit of blotter acid that was available at the time. (This trip took place in the late 80s). Most of the LSD that was around then probably only contained, on an average, about 50 micrograms or less. So it became a regular thing for me to take two and sometimes even three and four hits at a time and not have to worry about overdoing it. Or so I thought. .

In those days, I usually took an acid or psilocybin trip every couple of months and I attribute much of my current spiritual beliefs to the things that I learned while visiting the psychedelic realm. So when I decided that it was time for another psychedelic adventure, I got in touch with a friend who usually had a steady supply or would know where to look for it. It was my practice then to purchase LSD in quantities of 25 to 50 hits at a time and I would keep these in the freezer and use them accordingly and/or share them with friends.

I got in touch with my friend and although he didn't have any acid, he knew another guy who did. We hooked up with this person and he sold me a half-sheet of blotter. The hits were on plain white blotter paper with no markings and this friend of a friend told me that this batch was very, very strong and that I should only take one hit at a time, even if I was an experienced tripper. I thanked him and smiled to myself thinking that he was just being the typical good business man who was trying to pump up his product to some degree as just about everyone always said that their LSD was very potent, when it all usually turned out to be about the same: good, but with a low dosage level per hit as noted before.

The following Saturday night (when I always took my psychedelic journeys) I took two hits, ignoring what the dealer had told me. I received my first indicator that this ride was going to be different when I started to feel the effects in only about a half hour. (Most of the LSD that I have used prior to then and afterward took about an hour or more before I begin to feel the first effects).

The first sensations came in the form of a strong metallic taste on my tongue and a growing uneasiness that something was not quite right. When the LSD began to really come on, I began to feel as if I was being encased inside a timeless or "frozen" moment from which I could not escape. Time had suddenly stopped. I literally felt that all that made up the totality of "me" was beginning to shrink and disintegrate and my sense of Self was growing smaller and smaller by the second and that this Self would eventually fade completely away into a horrible nothingness from which there would be no return.

Before, I had always had the ability to know that I was on a powerful psychedelic drug and that I would eventually peak and start to mellow out into a smoother ride, even in some of the more intense trips that I had on prior occasions. But this time, I went up so fast that I had lost even that ability, in that I somehow could not recall, with any real precision, that I had taken a drug and became certain that I had entered into a place from which I would never leave and that my own psychological “death” was imminent.

Almost panicking, I felt that I couldn't stay inside the house any longer and I went outside into my backyard (which was heavily wooded and which gave me privacy from my neighbors) and sat down in the grass. What followed was a complete and overwhelming consumption of my ego by LSD. I felt that my entire self, all of the "me" that made up my being, was continuing to dissolve away and that which made up the "I" of my personality was being sucked down into a final and horrible vortex of nothingness where my mind would become a blank slate from which everything had been erased and could never be retrieved. I remember thinking in horror that my friends and family would probably find me either catatonic or in a complete state of amnesia and that I would not even have conscious thoughts of my own being.

I knew all about the phenomenon of ego-death that often accompanies some psychedelic sessions prior to this experience and thought that I had experienced this enough to where I could always revel in it, but this particular time was different, in part because it happened so fast and because I was not expecting the intensity and phenomenal acceleration of this trip. (I later determined that I had probably taken close to 500 or 750 mikes of very fresh and pure LSD; I have since taken this much LSD again, but I also had the luxury of being able to *know what to expect* and to "brace" myself for the ride!).

I lay on my back in the grass for the next two hours struggling against my "death" until I finally became so worn out that I just gave up and surrendered to what seemed to be the inevitable. At that exact instant, the very moment that I let go and surrendered to this "death," my fear left me completely and I was suddenly in a place that was suspended in time and where I (or all that was left of "I" anyway) felt the most serene and encompassing peace that I had ever felt. Yes, my "slate" had been wiped clean, but what was left was pure perfection of self, unencumbered with all of the baggage that I had accumulated in my entire lifetime.

To illustrate this further, for the rest of the trip, I found that I actually had to relearn or reprogram myself as to certain key concepts about everyday, mundane life, as if I was infant child, which, in the psychedelic sense, one could argue, *I was*. (And this may sound absurd, but I even got out my driver's license to make sure I actually still remembered who I was or at least, who I used to be!).

I went back into my house and after fumbling with the controls on my stereo system, managed to play some music. I marveled at the fact that such a thing of beauty as music could and had been created; I sat listening as I puzzled over hundreds of basic emotional ideas and dilemmas as if thinking of them for the very first time and as if these were alien concepts of human existence that I had never encountered before.

After the experience of ego death and rebirth had subsided, I finally entered into a state of almost pure bliss, where I felt connected to everyone and everything, the sensation of being at “one” with all things, in body, mind, and spirit, aware of the true meaning of the universe. I’m pretty sure that this was a prime example of what is known as the “Clear Light” experience, as described by so many other psychedelic voyagers and Zen Buddhist practitioners.

My life was never the same after this particular voyage, in that I retained complete lucid recall of the valuable lessons learned from the experience and have since used them to gauge my conduct and belief system accordingly. As with any death and rebirth experience, I don't take life as seriously as I used to in that I am not bothered as much by the day-to-day annoyances. I have managed not to allow too much baggage to accumulate and have simplified my life. And not too strangely, I no longer think of death in quite the same way, or fear it quite as much.

All in all, while the initial ascent was a bit more than I had anticipated and is not necessarily something I would want to experience again in quite the same way, I do not feel that this was a "bad trip" in that I consider it as one of the great learning experiences of my life.